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58, Frith Street,
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Edited by
COMPTON MACKENZIE

TELEPHONE: Regent 1383
TELEGRAMS:
Parmaxto, Westcent, London

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JUNE AND JULY RECORDS

By THE EDITOR

Where is he living, clipp'd in with the sea
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales,
Which calls me pupil, or hath read to me?
And bring him out that is but woman's son
Can teach me in the tedious ways of art
And hold me pace in deep experiments.

THUS Owen Glendower in the play, not, as you might suppose, Mr. Newman in the *Sunday Times*. But let me quote his actual words :

> The undeveloped state of English criticism may be gauged from the pontifical assurance with which our men of letters, and especially the minor novelists, deliver their opinion upon music. They, like other men, are, as I have said, entitled to their likes and dislikes. But music is, in the first place, a highly technical art, and, in the second place, there is not a critical problem connected with it that does not require to be seen against a vast background of history and æsthetics. It is no reproach against our men of letters that they have neither this technique nor this background. Our only reproach against them is that they will meddle with complex musical questions that they do not understand, instead of keeping to the writing of novels or some other equally easy form of manual labour. That these cobblers will persist in neglecting their own last in order to bring light into the darkness of musical criticism is, at bottom, simply another phase of the eternal ambition of an amateur to play Hamlet.

We have passed from the *argumentum ad hominem* to the *argumentum ad homines*, unless we are to suppose that Mr. Newman is playing Falstaff in the same play :

> If I fought not with fifty of them, call me a radish: if there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.

No, it won't do, Mr. Newman, and without a moment's hesitation I *do* call you a radish.

Whatever the faults of men of letters and minor novelists, they are as a class quite unaccustomed to pontificate on the subject of music. In fact, as Mr. Newman himself was inclined to complain not so long ago, novelists are singularly shy of the subject, and he was actually expressing surprise that some of these manual workers did not try their horny hands on the life of a composer. I am not quite clear what Mr. Newman intends to convey by his remark about Hamlet. If he knew

anything about acting, which his recent criticisms of the opera convince me he does not, he would know that Hamlet is probably the easiest big part in the whole of drama—not to play supremely well, of course, but to play at least well enough to make any amateur appear a much better actor than he really is. If, on the other hand, as I suspect, he intends to convey that Hamlet is the most difficult part for an amateur, I presume that he wishes us to suppose that musical criticism is something above the reach of any creative artist in any medium. Yet he begins his article by saying that musical criticism is as yet hardly out of its infancy. In saying that, Mr. Newman does himself less than justice, for much of his recent writing about music savours of the fretful curiosity of puberty, and it is only when he writes in King Cambyses' vein about men of letters that he relapses into the infantile.

We have now had Mr. Newman's justification of the patient Teuton who, with the help of micro-photography, restored the erasures in Mozart's correspondence, and practically all he tells us in two very long articles is that there was a dæmonic element in Mozart (which a drunken clown could discover for himself), and that like musical criticism he remained sexually undeveloped longer than usual. If Mr. Newman knew as much as he claims of the vast historical and aesthetic background against which he places his criticism, he would know that a tardy sexual development is widely spread among men of creative genius. I will go so far as to say that if Mr. Newman himself had not extinguished for the moment his own spark of critical genius he could have deduced this fact from Mozart's music without the help of the microscope. The manual labour of novel-writing may not compare with the cerebral travail of musical criticism; but a D minor novelist with an ear for music might have divined that fact. However, I suppose that with the emergence of musical criticism from the swaddling-clothes of academic decency (and in using that word I am thinking more of manners than of morals) we must expect a good deal of schoolboy knowingness. I suggest a little Aristotle as a corrective: yes, a little Aristotle and a fortnight in the sun, that is my prescription for the growing-pains of musical criticism. With this let me relinquish the scalpel and don the mitre.

In the race for leadership, with which readers of our advertisement columns must be familiar by now, it seems to me fairly safe at the moment to back Columbia for chamber-music and His Master's Voice for the orchestra, though the delightful surprises which are sprung upon us every month should warn us against being too confident over anything except the first sprints of the new recording.

In my article on the April and May records I displayed a good deal of enthusiasm over the Wagner records made by H.M.V. at Queen's Hall. We have now two more of these—*Siegfried's Funeral March*, and on one disc the *Ride of the Valkyries* and the Prelude to *Rhinegold*. Both of these maintain the level of the first two, and that is sufficient praise indeed. I notice "Silent Surface" as a new slogan on the H.M.V. bulletins. In June and mid-June this was accompanied by a self-conscious note of exclamation which has disappeared in the July bulletin. Now this claim is only justified when the music is loud enough. I cordially agree that the surface is much more silent than it ever was before, but it is not nearly so silent as the Columbia surface. Take, for instance, that Siegfried record. Compared with the old version, now removed from circulation, the scratch is very much reduced; but there it still is between those opening drum-taps that sound like the beating heart of earth itself, and all the exclamation marks in a foundry will not exorcize it. I confess to being a little jealous over the accuracy of a claim put forth by any company, and I should be happy to see this new slogan laid aside until it was really justified. None of the other orchestral recordings from H.M.V., or from anywhere else, can as yet compare with these Wagner records. The album of orchestral excerpts from *Der Rosenkavalier*, conducted by the composer, in spite of being made at Queen's Hall, have nothing like the actuality of the Wagner records. *Finlandia*, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald, of whose recovery from illness we are all delighted to hear, is not so successful as one might have expected; but knowing, as I do, how many people have entered into the magical domain of the orchestra by the portals of this work, I am glad to welcome it as one of the first of the electric recordings. Why it should be one of the chief portals I am at a loss to explain. Perhaps it is the familiar hymn-tune which pervades it. As I write this, the mid-July records have arrived from H.M.V., and contain a really superb record of Elgar's two *Pomp and Circumstance* marches, conducted by Sir Edward himself at Queen's Hall. In the same batch is the best De Groot I have heard for some time, and that is a delightful selection from Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers*. There is a lot to be said for Offenbach.

I suppose I am expected to vote definitely either for the new Columbia recordings of *Parsifal* or for those issued by H.M.V., but I don't intend to. To arrive at a decision I should have to play them both over and over again, by the end of which I should be too far from sanity to make my opinion worth anything. Both sets possess all the vices of the new recording, but since so many of my readers seem to think that I have no right to criticise even the recording of *Parsifal* I shall drop the subject. If I say that *Klingsor's Garden* here and there sounds on both sets as if all the bathrooms in the house were being smashed up simultaneously the *Parsifal*

devotees will not thank me, and if they like their favourite music to be treated thus from time to time rather than not treated at all, they must not blame me for refusing to take the responsibility of giving advice. The rest of the Columbia orchestral records for these two months all suffer from "metallics." However, evidently the recorders have no need of this warning, for I notice that no really important orchestral works are being produced. Meanwhile, they are concentrating on the perfection of chamber-music and with the happiest results. The Mozart *Quartet in G, No.* 19 (*Serenata*) was the best recording of a string quartet up to date, but July brought us the Schubert *Quartet in D minor* which is even better. It is particularly pleasant to be able to congratulate the London String Quartet on their triumph, for they were the pioneers of chamber-music on the gramophone. I will offer the two records of the exquisitely lovely Mozart Quartet, played by the Lener, to the first reader who tells me on a postcard what operatic aria must have been inspired by the slow movement in it, and which movement of the Schubert Quartet contains a theme used for one of the songs in *Lilac Time*, together with the name of the song.

Two more works of chamber music not hitherto recorded in full were provided in June and July. Brahms's *Second Sonata in A*, called the *Meistersinger* from a resemblance between the opening subject and the *Preislied*, came from Parlophone on three discs with the *Barcarolle* of Tchaikovsky on the sixth side, played by the Lorand Trio. Delightful music this, and Miss Lorand needs no recommendation from me. The Delius 'cello sonata played by Miss Beatrice Harrison and Mr. Harold Craxton is rather beyond my capacity for enjoyment at present. It wanders about over four sides of two discs with what, to the average man, will sound like a good deal of dull repetition. The recording is splendid, and I hope I shall grow to like it. I don't seem able to extract a sonata from it as yet, and if it isn't a sonata, why call it one? Poets do not write poems in eight lines and call them sonnets. Nobody wants to deny a composer the liberty of experiment, but why should he put new wine in old bottles? However, I expect that this is a perfectly good sonata all the time and that my own stupidity is to blame for not recognising it as such. None of the orchestral records from Parlophone or Vocalion much impressed me during these two months. I prefer other versions of the *Freischütz*, *Coriolanus*, and *Euryanthe* overtures; and the *Phäeton* of Saint-Saëns, though new, is not an interesting piece of work.

The pianoforte records are all good, and the choice for purchasers will lie with what is being played, rather than the way it is played or the quality of the recording. I was glad to hear Mr. Arthur De Greef, to whom we owe so much in the past for struggling manfully with old-time piano recording, triumph with Liszt's *Twelfth Rhapsody*; glad too that Miss Scharrer's exquisite touch and poetical playing should have the advantage of improved methods for Chopin's *Fantaisie Impromptu* and *Impromptu in A flat*.

Of violin records, a really lovely 10in. Kreisler playing Beethoven's *F major Gavotte* and a *Minuet* of Bach was my favourite. I found the Vocalion record of Jelly d'Aranyi in Brahms's *Fifth Hungarian Dance* a little wobbly, but perhaps I had a "swinger." The Vocalion record of York Bowen in the Chopin *Scherzo* is not so good as the performance by Moiseivitch a month or so ago.

Of the vocal records, the most sensational are the two made at Covent Garden by H.M.V. The disc of Dame Nellie Melba, singing Mimi's *Addio* and her speech of farewell on the other side, definitely mark a new epoch in the power of the gramophone. I shall have something to say presently about the reproduction of the applause, but for the moment I wish to express nothing except our profound homage to a great singer and a great lady and our intense appreciation of what the Gramophone Company has done in preserving that solemn occasion for ever. This record may wring tears from those as yet unborn, for I cannot believe that the world will ever grow too old to be touched by the sincere emotion of a great artist. A record like this may not draw the sting of death, but it does rob the grave of a complete victory.

The other Covent Garden record of Chaliapine singing *Sono lo spirito che nega* on one side and the *Fuga infernale* on the other, both from Boito's *Mefistofele*, is marvellous. It is the fashion of the moment in England to sneer at Boito and his work. I am not prepared to say more about his music than that I thoroughly enjoy it, be that bad or good taste, mature or immature. But with my tallest mitre jammed down on my head I will say as pontifically as I can, that Boito wrote by far the best librettos that were ever written for opera. He was a philosopher, a poet, a scholar, a novelist, an editor, a soldier of Garibaldi, and a great figure in European letters. He had enough vitality to inspire Verdi at the age of seventy-four to write *Othello*, and at eighty to write *Falstaff*. And this is the man that some of our sapient professional critics speak of as if he were a sleepy bluebottle which had survived the winter.

I thought the soprano of Miss Marion Talley, who makes her début on an H.M.V. record, a trifle hard, particularly in *Caro Nome*. Her voice, at first hearing, reminds me of Mabel Garrison's. Mme. Galli-Curci may have her faults, but at least she is unmistakably herself. I do not think she has gained much from electric recording, but Ophelia's mad scene from Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet* is such poor stuff that it is difficult to write

about the singer without prejudice. Genuine baroque like Donizetti's mad scene from *Lucia* can still charm us in certain moods ; but this imitation baroque is odious in any mood. Mme. Gerhardt's last records have been disappointing. When she was at her best, the gramophone was not, and it is sad indeed that her voice should be a little past its best when it might be adequately recorded. It is not so much the occasional vibrato, but a sense of effort all through which leads me into a most unwilling disparagement. Perhaps, the truth is that this great singer has never felt at ease in the recording-room, for certainly her charm of style has never really survived the gramophone's reproduction of it. To my taste by far the best soprano record of these two months has been Rossini's *Cavatina* from *The Barber of Seville*, sung by Fritzi Jokl, and issued by Parlophone. This is truly an entrancing performance, and I may remind readers who write to complain of the prominence I accord to double-sided celebrities that it costs only 4s. 6d. Everybody who appreciates the very best singing will thank me for recommending this disc with a good deal of fervour. Another beautiful Parlophone record is that of Elsie Knepel and Alfred Lange (with chorus) in the *Herd Boy's Song* and *Pilgrims' Chorus* from *Tannhäuser*. I believe I am right in saying we have no record of this published in England. Readers who cannot afford both these records should make a note of them for a prosperous occasion. These swan-songs of the old recording are a very great deal better than some of the first cuckoos of the microphone. Miss Thursfield gave us her best record up to date in a couple of Debussy's songs and a charming eighteenth century song of Martini. From the point of view of singing and recording, the Vocalion disc of Miss Ethel Hook was one of the best contralto records I have ever heard, and when I say that one of the chosen items was *Love's Old Sweet Song* I feel that it really must have been very good indeed to be able to make such an impression. No contralto has quite such a *simpatica* voice as Miss Hook. Might she not sometimes allow herself to assume that her audience will not consist entirely of women in bustles and men with mutton-chop whiskers ? Nobody can accuse me of revolutionary tendencies or echoing the *dernier cri*, but even my sentimental conservatism becomes restless under *Just a song at twilight when the lights are low*, and I feel inclined to turn on all the electric light available. De Gogorza's record of Mephistophele's serenade from Berlioz' *Damnation of Faust* is very much better than any other I have heard, and the new Journet version comes nowhere near to dethroning it, in spite of new recording. Nor did I greatly care for his rendering of the Gounod serenade in spite of reading in the H.M.V. bulletin, " how shudderingly fiendish is the horrible cackle of laughter with which he punctuates the melodic phrases ! " Compare it with the third Mephistophelian air of these two months sung by Chaliapine from Boito's opera. The best of M. Journet's four arias is *La Calunnia è un Venticello* from the *Barber*. Lovers of Boris Godounov will be grateful for the Chaliapine record of the Coronation Scene, and the two records of the Revolutionary Scene conducted by Albert Coates. I have not been able to find an outstanding tenor record in any of the bulletins these two months. Tito Schipa has beautiful moments in *Liebesträume*, but he forces his voice unpleasantly. Mr. Derek Oldham was singing charmingly, but I found the songs rather dull. John McCormack sang three of his four ballads a little defiantly, as if he was thoroughly ashamed of them, which he probably was, and he sang *I heard a brown bird singing* without the sincerity that he was able once upon a time to give it. It's like a love letter written about a year after the need to write it has faded. For baritone records, I find my two best in the Aco list, and John Thorne is the singer. Not only is Mr. John Thorne to my taste the best English baritone now singing for the gramophone, but in spite of appearing on popular priced records, he chooses his songs more intelligently than most of the others. I can only suppose by the regularity with which he figures in every Aco bulletin that his unobtrusive work is widely appreciated. I was delighted by Mr. John Buckley's singing of some sea shanties for Vocalion. Every word as clear as it could be, and a fine open unaffected style. A capital record this. And in concerted singing I must call special attention to John Goss and his merry men in some folk songs.

The newest Orchorsol sound-box and tone-arm—not the improved pair about which I wrote a couple of months ago, but a further improvement—have been with me for three or four days, and I have no hesitation in saying that they make the table model I possess the best table model I have yet heard ; but, of course, it's overwhelmingly difficult to pass from a table model to a large H.M.V. instrument, and decide which is the better. I can say positively that the applause at the end of Dame Nellie Melba's farewell sounded on the H.M.V. as if somebody had knocked over all the biscuit-tins in Harrods, whereas on the Orchorsol it really did sound like human hands being clapped. On the other hand, when it came to the orchestra I still found that the H.M.V. instrument gave me a more perfect illusion of the real thing, though I am willing to admit that the greater resonance of the H.M.V. may be an illegitimate way of achieving the illusion of actuality. On top of the Orchorsol sound-box came a sound-box from Mr. Virtz, specially tuned for my H.M.V. machine. This was more successful with the applause than the No. 4. sound-box, but not so successful as the

Orchorsol, which looks as if it was the H.M.V. horn that was too grand to deal with simple noises like the clapping of hands. On top of the Virtz sound-box came one called the Vitatone, which, though it failed with the applause on the Balmain has such wonderful volume that I believe the inventor of it, if he will not be too pleased with what he has done already, may easily produce a better sound-box than any of them. And here I must stop for the present with one more word. *I have returned to fibre for all new recordings.* No flowers by request.

P.S.—In the *Sunday Times* of July 11th Mr. Ernest Newman announces his conversion to the gramophone after hearing some of the new recordings. He writes with genuine enthusiasm, and one hopes that, busy man though he be, he will manage to find an opportunity to give a little attention to the most important records, as they appear, and enough patience to get that pinch of salt his oboe lacks by fixing a Virtz salt-cellar to his tone-arm.

What I would buy if I were buying one :—

ORCHESTRAL RECORD.

H.M.V., D.1092. *Siegfried's Funeral March*, Albert Coates and Symphony Orchestra, 6s. 6d., 12in.

Or, if Wagner is not wanted—

H.M.V., D.1102. *Pomp and Circumstance, No.* 1 *in D*, and *Pomp and Circumstance, No.* 2 *in A minor*, Sir Edward Elgar and R.A.H. Orchestra, 6s. 6d., 12in.

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(Only complete works recommended.)

Col. L.1729–30. *Quartet in G major, No.* 10 (*Serenata*) (Mozart), Lener Quartet, 13s., 12in.

PIANOFORTE.

H.M.V., D.1093. *Rhapsodie Hongroise, No.* 12 (Liszt), Arthur de Greef, 6s. 6d., 12in, or—

H.M.V., D.1087. *Fantaisie Impromptu* and *Impromptu in A flat* (Chopin), Irene Scharrer 6s. 6d., 12in.

VIOLIN.

H.M.V., D.A.777. *Gavotte in F major* (Beethoven) and *Minuet* (Bach-Winternitz), Fritz Kreisler, 6s., 10in.

VIOLONCELLO.

Aco. G.15964. *Memoire* (Popper) and *La Cinquantaine* (Gabriel Marie), Marie Dare, 2s. 6d., 10in.

SOPRANO.

Parlo. E.10461. Rosina's *Cavatina* from the *Barber of Seville* (Rossini), Fritzi Jokl, 4s. 6d., 12in.

CONTRALTO.

Voc. K.95236. But I cannot pretend that I really should buy *Love's Old Sweet Song* and *Sweet and Low Lullaby* in spite of Miss Ethel Hook's charming performance of them. 4s. 6d., 12in.

TENOR.

Aco. G.15961. I should not have bought any tenor record published in June or July, though I might have run to half-a-crown for Herbert Garry in *The Minstrel Boy* and *Danny Boy*, for the commonplace words of which latter F. E. Weatherly may have what credit he likes ; but he should not be printed as the composer of the *Londonderry Air*. 2s. 6d., 10in.

BARITONE.

Aco. G.15980. *A Crusader's Song* (Hugo Wolf) and *Who is Sylvia?* (Schubert). 2s. 6d., 10in.

The Wolf song is worth the money. John Thorne is not much more successful than anybody else in the serenade from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. I can't make out this repeated failure by every singer who tries it.

BASS.

H.M.V., D.B.942. *Son lo Spirito che nega* and *Ridda e Fuga Infernale* (Boito), Theodore Chaliapine (with chorus and orchestra). 8s. 6d., 12in.

Recorded during the performance at Covent Garden Opera House, May 31st, 1926.

CHORAL.

H.M.V., B.2314. *Sheep Shearing* (Dorset Folk Song) and (*a*) *Robin, gentle Robin*, (*b*) *Fie, nay prithee, John*, John Goss (baritone) and the Cathedral Male Voice Quartet, 3s., 10in.

LIGHT RECORD.

Col. 3957. *Show me the way to go home* and *Collegiate Blues*, the Singing Sophomores Quintette, 3s., 10in.

N.B.—I have to preserve the convention that I should buy one of everything, but if I were a genuine purchaser I know quite well that before I sank a halfpenny in anything else I should add the Schubert *D minor Quartet* (Col. 1751–52–53–54, 26s., in album) to the Mozart quartet (Col. L.1729–30).

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

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THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Why "International" Opera?

I HAVE grown to dislike the word "international." It has been much abused of late years, and, whether applied to musical celebrities or to Communistic Trade Unions, its precise meaning is no longer easy to determine. Originally, I believe, the substantive form of the word was used to indicate the secret societies that seek "the assertion everywhere of the sovereign rights of the working man." As an adjective it signified all things pertaining to the intercourse between different nations, diplomatic relations, athletic contests of the Olympic order, exhibitions and so forth. But with music in a general sense, or with musical artists in particular, it had absolutely nothing in common. In art, as I am never tired of repeating, there ought to be no such thing as nationality, whatever the native land of the individual professing or practising it. How, then, can it be reasonably claimed that there is such a thing as musical "internationality"?

In seriously asking those concerned—excepting the circus proprietors and other demonstrative showmen for whom it may still have a positive value—to abandon the use of so ambiguous a term, I am appealing not alone to certain high-class concert *entrepreneurs*, but to the management of "opera on the grand scale," who may be tempted after recent successes to employ the word "international" permanently as a guarantee of super-excellence. For my part I regard it as nothing of the kind, and, what is more, I consider it as being in a degree derogatory to the dignity of all great artists, who are thus by inference declared to have the right to appear in first-rate company solely in virtue of the fact that they are foreigners. I trust, therefore, that the London Opera Syndicate will not perpetuate this error. It has now shown us for two years in succession what it is capable of doing. It has fairly established a high reputation for its manner of carrying on opera at Covent Garden. It has admitted English singers to its *personnel* to undertake such parts as they were capable of performing with credit to themselves and to the advantage of the ensemble. When another Albani or another Melba becomes available it will even resume the engagement of British "stars." Meanwhile, the "grand" season at Covent Garden, which sins only by its brevity, is not a whit more "international" to-day than it was fifty or a hundred years ago.

It may be taken for granted that the London Opera Syndicate is going on. The season just ended was not only a genuine artistic success, but it probably went as near to paying expenses as any big operatic undertaking in the metropolis is ever likely to. It began splendidly and it ended as it began; no novelties, and only one or two singers whom we had not heard before, but a steady succession of fine, efficient, satisfying performances. There was no chance to grow tired of anybody or anything. I have no recollection of such frequent changes of bill, such a variety of casts, or such brief appearances of first-class artists. That kind of campaign can only be carried out, of course, when an impresario can afford to pay big terms to famous —not merely "international"—artists to sing three or four or half-a-dozen nights; in fact, as few or as many as may be required, backed beforehand by the comforting assurance that the house will be sold out at high prices and that the season's subscription for boxes and stalls is already secured with the money in the bank. In such fashion alone are these operatic miracles to be worked.

I left off last month with a brief reference to the revival of *Manon*. That was a particularly good performance of an opera that is seldom well done here. You can count perfect Manons seen in London on the fingers of a single hand; and, oddly enough, I was thinking of one of the best of them when the news came of her death in Paris. I allude, of course, to Marie Rôze, a French artist of rare charm, who was the first to sing the part in this country. She was most popular, perhaps, in *Carmen*, though I thought her too "ladylike" (like Trebelli) to be an ideal representative of Bizet's heroine. But her Manon, whether she sang it in Italian or English, was an embodiment replete with grace, elegance, and womanly tenderness, and I must say I have heard no better until Fanny Heldy appeared upon the scene. I am not sure whether she has yet recorded any of the music, but anyhow I hope that when she does she will have Fernand Ansseau for her companion, as at Covent Garden, and that the pair of them will record their scenes together as delightfully as they did at Covent Garden.

Two nights after that came the diverting double-bill consisting of *L'Heure Espagnole* and *Gianni Schicchi*, neither of which provides any material worth mentioning for the gramophonist, but which certainly furnish between them a capital evening's entertainment. The two short operas form a perfect contrast, and I scarcely know which is the more

difficult, the cleverer, or the more characteristic of its composer. I only wish that Ravel would write another opera or two of the same calibre as *L'Heure Espagnole*, with a libretto rather better suited for universal degustation. It might not be so amusing, but it would probably be easier to understand than the meaningless nonsense set forth as a plot in the Covent Garden programme. The conception of Fanny Heldy was extremely fascinating, but vocally not on a par with her Manon, which was more adapted to her Conservatoire training. Maguenat as the muleteer was again simply perfect, and the other male characters, with one exception, were in familiar hands.

It was due to the masterly skill of the new Italian *régisseur*, Giovacchino Forzano, that the comedy of *Gianni Schicchi* was carried out with so much spirit and energy. The drollery of the situations, wherein the cunning Schicchi so completely outwits the greedy relations who are waiting to pounce upon the dead man's property, has never been so quaintly realised here. Equally new to many ears was the quaint scherzo-like appropriateness of Puccini's music, every note of which seems to be spontaneously evolved from the humours and emotions of the dramatic flow of ideas. Italian and English artists filled the cast between them, and Ernesto Badini showed himself in the name part an actor of consummate ability as well as a master of clear-cut, sparkling diction. Here, too, let me pay another tribute to the skill of the new conductor, Vincenzo Bellezza, whom I consider a genuine "find" for the Covent Garden management. He knows exactly what latitude to allow his singers; he accompanies without overwhelming them; his orchestra is under absolute control; and he knows his scores thoroughly. I hope we shall be having Bellezza here again next year.

For the wind-up of the season we had a real *bonne bouche* in the shape of Verdi's *Falstaff*, that marvellous product of the old age of a great master. Welcome the revival was in every sense; for creditable as are the occasional performances that we get from academic sources, they are at best but makeshifts, and afford only a faint notion of the wealth of ingenuity and technical resource, of creative power and skill of delineation, concentrated in the pages of this amazing work. Obviously, mature artists alone can grapple with the difficulties presented here—by Shakespeare's superbly-drawn character and by Verdi's highly elaborate settings of each and every scene. A youthful Falstaff, no matter how cleverly made up, must be something of a square peg in a round hole, and the fact that Mariano Stabile seemed a trifle young for the part was the solitary fault that I had to find with his otherwise superb impersonation. It lacked the mellow ripeness of the older Italians and, of course, the Shakespearian quality of the English actors who have been associated with the rôle of the amorous knight. Yet, when all has been said, Stabile's was a wonderfully finished and satisfying performance, and I was quite able to understand, after witnessing it, the enormous reputation that it has won for him in his native land. The vanity and conceit of the old coxcomb were portrayed in a thousand adroit touches, combining as a whole to produce a highly humorous and amusing portrait. He also sang very finely in the exacting scenes at the Garter Inn —everything except the exquisite little passage, *Quand ero paggio del Duca di Norfolk*, in which his *mezza voce* diction disappointed me after Maurel's miracle of delicacy—a joy never to be forgotten in this zephyr-like breath of song.

My critical colleagues were curiously at variance in their estimation of the work done by the Italian ladies who represented the "Merry Wives." Some thought them excellent, some the reverse. My own opinion did not go to either extreme, because I thought they acted well whilst singing on the whole with too little refinement, too noisily, or, as they would say, with too much *brio*. Their ensembles with the men also needed toning down, and would have been the better for another rehearsal or two; yet for my own part I prefer in this complex music an excess of spirit to doses of dullness—such, for example, as the two lovers, Fenton (Charles Hackett) and Nannetta (Aurora Rettore), permitted themselves to indulge in. Sweet Anne Page ought to be sentimental, I allow, but surely never dull. Bellezza was again the conductor, and I thought he brought out all the beauty without overdoing the vigour of Verdi's masterful orchestration.

With a repetition of *Falstaff* on the last night, the subscribers and the general public turned their backs upon Covent Garden in the healthy condition known as "wishing there were more." That ensures their looking forward to next year, and also suggests the wisdom of a slightly longer season. Another ten or fifteen performances would, I feel sure, be welcomed, and might surely be ventured upon without financial risk. This could be done by starting on or about the 1st of May and continuing until the middle of July. It would then be practicable to give at least two cycles of the *Ring*, instead of only one, and more repetitions of the Wagner operas for which the house is said to be, and generally is, "sold out."

HERMAN KLEIN.

Send 5s. to the Secretary,
NATIONAL GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY,
58, Frith Street, London, W.1.,
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See p. 119.

GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

XVI.—Mattia Battistini

By THE EDITOR

IT is related on the authority of the *maestro* himself that when he was very young he one day snatched his mother's shawl, climbed up on the table and with "inspired and academic postures" sang through all the melodies he knew, greatly to the edification of an uncle who was present and who on the strength of that first performance, prophesied for him the career of an artist. We may assume from this anecdote that Battistini had a natural predisposition toward the grand style. Such, indeed, is the birthright of every young Italian, particularly one like Battistini who is *romano di Roma*, and though there has been a tendency of late among the *giovinezza* to feel overburdened by the weight of their ancient masterpieces, an oppression against which Marinetti was the first to protest vociferously enough to gain the attention of Europe, that natural inclination toward the grand style always reasserts itself. Marinetti himself when last I talked with him was become as academic as the waters of Cephissus; and Signor Mussolini's hold upon the imagination of his people owes not a little to his ability to sustain "inspired and academic postures" and to pour forth rhetoric in the grand style. I doubt if the Latin nations will ever abandon it until all their dust is mingled with the dust of Cicero. M. Briand has never really lived down his lapse from the grand style when in the presence of photographers he accepted from Mr. Lloyd George that fatal lesson in golf. The English are apt to suppose that too great a devotion to the grand style implies a lack of humour, and they share this dread (as inexplicably they share many other characteristics) with the Jews. The failure of Lord Curzon to impress his personality on his countrymen was due more than anything to the fact that when he had his opportunity the grand style was in worse odour than almost at any other time in the nation's history; and remembering Henry VIII, Oliver Cromwell, the two Pitts, Disraeli, and Joseph Chamberlain one may ask what statesmen the grand style can muster against such a list, not a single member of which could be credited by anybody with such an incubus.



[*Photo. E. Bieber*

Now, as it seems to me, the grand style is essential to an art-form like opera, and it may be that the failure of opera in England is due to its failure to keep pace with the development of English dramatic taste. For a time the superficial modernity of Puccini maintained a vogue, but that is already outworn, except among old-fashioned people like myself; and though at the moment there is a great deal of optimism about the revival of the ballad opera with an inclination to talk about it as the natural expression of the English operatic genius, nobody who has watched the undulations of taste can possibly deceive himself about the temporary nature of what is no more than a passing fashion. The only steady and ever growing en-

thusiasm has been for the operas of Wagner, and so far as Strauss has had any popular success in England it has been because people are always hoping to find themselves converted to Strauss as their parents were converted to Wagner. On the other side, there is a genuine taste for the best singing, and the fact that we cannot afford the best nowadays, a loss of which the gramophone makes us exceedingly conscious, does not in the least incline us to accept the second best. The B.N.O.C. has rarely provided more than a capable amateur performance of any opera, and it is difficult to believe that any of its members ever climbed on his mother's table and sustained " inspired and academic postures " like our young Battistini. To be sure the B.N.O.C. has disregarded any of those old operas which might have afforded an excuse for such postures, but their performers were equally at a loss to supply the passion necessary to make even a performance of *Carmen* anything but lukewarm. They were most successful with Wagner, because their orchestra was better than their singers, and since several of those singers had good voices they managed to produce an effect in spite of being bad actors and dull singers. There never seems a dearth of good voices, and even as I write these words I find it easy to fancy that some sun-dyed Italian alley is already echoing to the peer of Caruso's golden tenor. This year, next year, the year after we may be saluting it; but a vanished style, that will never be recaptured, and in offering our homage to Mattia Battistini we offer it less to the noble quality of his baritone than to the exquisite art with which he has used it. One may doubt if the world will ever hear again quite so courtly a singer, and I am beginning to regret that I did not invite Mr. Klein to shoulder the pleasant burden of praising Battistini. With his profounder knowledge and wider memories added to his own peculiar suavity of exposition he would have known not merely how to convey the precise flavour of a rich personality, but also to place him historically as it were. However, rashly enough I have undertaken the task, and I find myself wishing for the pen of dear Elia when he writes of the old actors, or of Hazlitt when he compels us to share with him a good book in the right mood and amid the right surroundings, or of Professor Saintsbury when he celebrates an illustrious burgundy. And, now I come to think of it, listening to Battistini is uncommonly like drinking good burgundy. That sudden sweetness which rests for a moment upon the palate like a breath of the summer that ripened the grapes, and which even as we taste it in the half-expectation that it will become a veritable attar of roses is swallowed up again in the vigour of the great full-bodied wine, does it not remind one of the way Battistini's *mezza voce* suddenly appears, lingers for a moment, and vanishes? The records of *Vien*, *Leonora* and *Occhi di fata* supply good examples of what I mean. Those touches of sweetness are only tolerable in a great burgundy. Taste them in a poor or pretentious wine, and they turn at once to mere sickliness. And as with the sweetness so with the harshness. All great burgundies know when to show the iron hand in the velvet glove. A poor wine shows no more than a tin hand in a glove of plush. There are moments in listening to Battistini when one says to oneself ' a little more and he will become raucous,' but that little more never arrives. We have scarcely had time to feel alarm before we are floating once more on the full smooth ocean of sound. Even thus are we carried along by a great burgundy. When Homer sang of the wine-dark sea he was probably thinking of his own Samian. Perhaps Samian was the burgundy of the heroic age. Nowadays it is a harsh and raucous liquor, potent enough, but lacking generosity, by no means a wine of the grand style, a crabbed awkward wine, at its worst an inky wine, and even at its best, as I have drunk it in arbours of pomegranate, fit for not much more than to stain the rosy flesh of a watermelon with crimson.

Mattia Battistini was born in Rome, on February 27th, 1858, according to my information, though I notice that in the cellars of the Gramophone Company he is labelled '57. He came of noble family, and his father was Professor of Anatomy at the University of Rome. On his mother's side he descended from a French family which left France during the Revolution and became Italian. In spite of those " inspired and academic postures " in early youth Battistini's father wanted to make a doctor of him, but his heart was set on singing, and at sixteen he studied under Persichini and Terziani. He even sang at small concerts, and with the help of his mother he gradually overcame his father's prejudice. His début in opera was essentially a début in the grand style. Galletti was the great soprano of the day for Rome, and Battistini fell to dreaming in the grand style, for he actually aspired to sing Don Alphonso to her Leonora in *La Favorita*, in which she had her greatest success. One day the baritone at the Argentino fell ill, and Mancinelli the director, who had heard Battistini at various times, asked him if he knew the part of Don Alphonso well enough to sing it that very night with Galletti. This was at noon, and Battistini was taken to Galletti's house by Mancinelli. Here they waited half an hour for the *diva* to appear. You see, the grand style is never allowed to flag.

When I was a month over twenty-three I was touring with my father in order to produce my first play in Edinburgh. On the Sunday night, travelling from Aberdeen, his voice failed completely. My play was to be produced on the Thursday night, and it would have ruined the production if

the understudies had been called upon. So I offered with the glorious confidence of youth to play Charles Surface in *The School for Scandal* on the Monday night. I learnt the part on arrival, rehearsed it once, and spent the rest of Monday rehearsing my own play. That night my father's voice was no better, so I learnt the part of Bob Acres in *The Rivals* and played it on Tuesday after one rehearsal, using the rest of the time for rehearsing my own play. On Tuesday after the performance I learnt the part of Tony Lumpkin, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, but luckily my father's voice recovered sufficiently to be able to play that and the chief part in my own play on the following night.

Now what Battistini's feelings were like during that half-hour while he was waiting in Galletti's *salone* for the *diva* to appear it makes me feel almost faint to imagine when I remember that experience in Edinburgh. The *diva* was gracious and spoke kindly to the young man of twenty. In spite of those "inspired and academic postures" I suspect he looked as if he badly needed kindness. Anyway, she asked him to sing Don Alphonso's great aria *A tanto amor* and when he had finished she invited him to sing with her that night. Perhaps it was just as well for Battistini's nerves that he was immediately hurried off to the tailor to have the costumes altered. He describes himself as a little gauche and somewhat timid when he made his first entrance that night. I should think so. However, as soon as he began to sing the nervousness passed, and by the time the curtain fell on the third act he was famous. The enthusiasm for the new baritone did not put the prima donna out of countenance, and it was she who explained to him that the audience was acclaiming him and not herself. She bade him lift his hat to salute the public, which he did, clumsily he assures us, but we may be allowed to doubt the clumsiness. Thenceforward Battistini's career never had a set back. He has sung in eighty-two operas and, as one might have expected from the shawl incident, he always took immense trouble with his costumes. His wardrobe was exceptional, but unfortunately most of it was lost in Russia during the war. He was as greatly beloved by princes as by peoples, and probably no singer has received more decorations. He will no doubt be proudest of the emerald ribbon of Saint Maurice and Lazarus, of which I think I am right in saying he is a Commander. No other singer has ever been so highly favoured by his own sovereign. The catalogue of his decorations would be tedious. Apparently England is the only country which has not honoured him; but England is not in the habit of honouring even her own singers, preferring to make maypoles of politicians and civil servants.

The thirty-seven double-sided discs which will commemorate Battistini's voice for posterity do him a good deal less than justice. The earliest two records of his in the green (shall we say the evergreen?) celebrity catalogue date from 1907, by which year the singer was fifty. He had already been singing on the operatic stage for thirty years, and we may feel sure that the very prime of his voice had already passed. On top of that the deficiencies of recording twenty years ago must be remembered, and it was not till the *maestro* was getting on for sixty-five that his voice was being recorded adequately. Lastly, the fine figure of a man that he was, carrying off superbly his fine clothes, able to turn a leg and flourish a plumed hat against anybody, all these extras that contribute so much to the effectiveness of an operatic singer, are not recorded on wax. I do not mean to suggest that all the advantages of being a good actor are lost—and let me add that I refuse to consider any operatic singer a great singer unless he is as much actor as singer—but anybody who has heard and seen Scotti will realize the effect of personality in producing the illusion of a great voice. On the gramophone Scotti shows clearly that he possesses no more than a baritone of the second quality, but he was such an incomparable actor and so immensely attractive that it was impossible not to believe that he was a really great singer. De Luca's baritone is probably the most pleasant that can be heard on the gramophone, and though I have never had the good fortune to hear him in the flesh I should suppose that he was an excellent actor with much humour. To Battistini I should not attribute a great deal of humour. I have already hinted that the grand style is not the most propitious for humour. It is significant that we possess no record of him as Figaro in the *Barbiere*, nor any of him as Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, nor any of him as Falstaff. He is always at his best in the heavy or, if you will, the theatrical part. I think that nowadays we are inclined to be rather too mistrustful of the theatrical. The underacting of the present day does not produce the illusion of naturalness to which it pretends. The fact is that, whether as by the old school of actors a mirror in a florid gilt frame is held up to nature or whether as by the modern school a shaving-glass is offered to that elusive matron, we seldom behold her countenance. I do not fancy that playgoers will ever again take seriously *I Puritani* or *Lucia* or *La Favorita*, any more than I fancy that readers will ever again take Mrs. Radcliffe's novels seriously. So perhaps the loss of a style like Battistini's is less serious than I seemed to suggest. Yet it is serious, for while admitting that it adorned a great deal of fustian, I am always dismayed by a breach in the continuity of art. The disastrous results of this are dreadfully apparent on the stage. A year or so ago I saw a Congreve comedy at The

Lyric, Hammersmith, which was remarkable for a fine piece of artificial acting by Miss Edith Evans and for some of the most pitiably gauche and amateurish performances by the rest of the cast I have ever had the misfortune to sigh through. The French by maintaining a classical school of acting without denying liberty to the other styles have been wise. We may see Racine in Paris as Racine should be played; but we shall never again see Sheridan or Congreve or perhaps even Shakespeare as they should be played. The recent production of *Hamlet* in modern dress was not so much a silly stunt as a confession of weakness.

The tendency of opera writers in the future will probably be toward submerging the singer more and more in the music, and I can perfectly understand and sympathise with the point of view of a composer who considers the human voice a nuisance. Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, Verdi wrote to show off the voice, and when I listen to a singer like Battistini in such an aria as *O Lisbona* I cannot bring myself to believe that a composer like Donizetti is quite so ridiculous as the fashion of the moment would have us think. I am willing to admit that saxophones could easily be more effective than the human voice, but so long as the human voice *is* used I confess I like it to be used beautifully. Hear Mr. Tudor Davies sing one of these Donizetti *arias* and the result will be very nearly ludicrous, but hear Battistini, and the sun is shining warmly through a tattered curtain.

With regard to the classification of the records I should explain that I have put in Class 1 those of which both sides are superlatively good. In Class 2 those sides marked with a star are equal to the best in Class 1, but the second side would sometimes have been relegated to Class 3. Similarly, the sides marked with a star in Class 3 would have been worthy of Class 2. You will notice that I have put a double star beside *O del mio dolce ardor*, and I should vote for that as the best of all the records, although owing to the unfortunate occupation of the other side by *Si vous l'aviez compris* the disc as a whole finds itself in the second class. Apart from this and an opportunity missed by not putting the two arias from *La Favorita* on the same disc, the double-sided expert has arranged the Battistini records well. Where no star is affixed to either side both sides are in their own class. I hope that readers will check my classification with the H.M.V. catalogue. I have not allowed any personal likes or dislikes of the music to interfere with my attempt to judge the voice, and have kept strictly in mind that the object of such a classification is to give people a guide to the records of Battistini's great baritone. I have no doubt that other people will have their own favourites to which they will think I have been unfair; but I may mention that I have not made this classification as a result of listening to the records in different moods, but by the fatiguing method of playing them right through one after another on two evenings. Luckily most of them have been familiar to me from the time I began to take an interest in the gramophone, though I must take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the Gramophone Company for sending me the complete set of the Battistini records and thus enabling me to fill in the gaps in my own collection. Is it necessary for me to add that the following classification is merely relative? All the Battistini records are very good, though it is well to remember that the orchestral accompaniments are often horrible. This should be borne in mind when buying from the evergreen catalogue, which should only be used by connoisseurs. The average man will probably prefer Class 2 from the crimson ramblers to Class 1 from the evergreens. In any case, I hope readers will take the trouble to try over records for themselves if possible.

CLASS 1.

Catalogue 1. (Crimson Ramblers.)

D.B. 150.—*Ah non avea più lagrime* (*Maria di Rudenz*), Donizetti, and *O casto fior* (*Rè di Lahore*), Massenet.

D.B.210.—*Averla tanto amata* and *Quando amor m'accende* (*Africana*), Meyerbeer.

D.B.149.—*Ah! non mi ridestar!* (*Werther*), Massenet, and *Visione fuggitiva* (*Herodiade*), Massenet.

D.B.198.—*Alla vita che t'arride* (*Ballo in Maschera*), Verdi, and *Vieni meco, sol di rose* (*Ernani*), Verdi. (With Emilia Corsi and chorus).

D.B.147.—*Bella e di sol vestita* (81) (*Maria di Rohan*), Donizetti, and *Voce fatal di morte* (*Maria di Rohan*), Donizetti.

Catalogue 2. (Evergreens.)

D.B.207.—*Cruda, funesta smania* (*Lucia*), Donizetti, and *O Lisbona, alfin ti miro* (*Don Sebastian*), Donizetti.

D.B.200.—*Eri tu che macchiavi quell 'anima* (76) (*Ballo in Maschera*, Verdi, and *Lo vedremo, o veglio audace* (*Ernani*), Verdi. (With Sillich).

CLASS 2.

Catalogue 1. (Crimson Ramblers.)

D.B.736.—**A tanto amor* (*Favorita*,) Donizetti, and *Non più andrai* (*Nozze di Figaro*), Mozart.

D.B.212.—**Era la notte* (*Otello*), Verdi, and *Tre sbirri una carrozza* (*Tosca*), Puccini.

D.B.731.—***O del mio dolce ardor* (*Paride ed Elena*), Gluck, and *Si vous l'aviez compris* (Denza).

D.B.190.—**O ma charmante* (80) (Quaranta), and *Culto—Romanza* (Denza).

D.B.197.—**Oh de' verd' anni miei* (*Ernani*), Verdi, and *A' miei rivali cedere* (*Ruy Blas*), Marchetti.

D.B.189.—**Resta immobile e ver la terra* (*Guglielmo Tell*), Rossini, and *Su queste rose* (*Damnazione di Faust*), Berlioz.

D.B.216.—**Ebbrezza delirio!* (*Gioconda*), Ponchielli, (with I. De Witt), and *O sommo Carlo* (*Ernani*), Verdi (with De Witt, Taccani and chorus).

D.A.189.—**Si vendetta* (*Rigoletto*), Verdi. (With Lulu Hayes) and *Egli è salvo* (*Forza del Destino*), Verdi.

D.B.195.—*Ah, per sempre io ti perdei* (*Puritani*), and *Bel sogno beato di pace* (*Puritani*), Bellini.

D.B.196.—*Allor che tu coll' estro* (81) (*Tannhäuser*), Wagner, and *O santa medaglia* (*Dio possente*) (*Faust*), Gounod.

D.B.738.—*Eri tu che macchiavi* (*Ballo in Maschera*), Verdi, and *Urna fatale* (*Forza del Destino*), Verdi.

D.B.194.—*Ma come dopo il nembo* (*Werther*), Massenet, and *Oh, tu, bell' astro incantador* (*Tannhäuser*), Wagner.

CATALOGUE 2. (EVERGREENS.)

D.B.214.—*Delizia*, (Beethoven), and *Le Soir*, (Gounod).

D.B.239.—*Si può?* (*Prologo*), and *Un nido di memorie* (*Prologo*) (*Pagliacci*), Leoncavallo.

D.B.215.—*D'acqua aspergimi* (*Thaïs*), Massenet. (With Janni) and *Un buon servo del visconte* (*Linda di Chamounix*), Donizetti. (With Moscisca).

CLASS 3.

CATALOGUE 1. (CRIMSON RAMBLERS.)

D.B.213.—**Ideale*, and *Amour, amour!*, Tosti.

D.B.199.—**Lotta dei Bardi* (*Tannhäuser*), Wagner, and *Pietà, rispetto, amore* (*Macbeth*), Verdi.

D.B.208.—**Occhi di fata*, Denza, and *La Serenata*, Tosti.

D.B.148.—**Vien, Leonora* (*Favorita*), Donizetti, and *Per me giunto* (*Don Carlos*), Verdi.

D.B.204.—**Oh mia Gilda!* (*Rigoletto*), Verdi. (With Moscisca). and *Ambo nati* (*Linda di Chamounix*), Donizetti.

D.B.202.—*Come il romito fior*, and *O vin', discaccia la tristezza* (*Amleto*), Thomas.

D.B.201.—*Di Provenza il mar* (*Traviata*), Verdi, and *Pura siccome un angelo* (*Traviata*), Thomas (with Moscisca).

D.B.192.—*Gondola nera*, Rotoli, and *Non m'ama più*, Tosti.

D.B.203.—*Decidi il mio destin* (*Pagliacci*,) Leoncavallo, and *E allor perchè* (both with Moscisca).

CATALOGUE 2. (EVERGREENS.)

D.B.209.—**Bella Italia*, Goffredo-Cocchi, and *Il mio Lionel* (76) (*Marta*), Flotow.

D.B.205.—**Da quel di che t'ho veduta* (*Ernani*), Verdi (with Pini Corsi) and *Oh! sommo Carlo* (*Ernani*), Verdi (quartet with Pini Corsi, Colazza and Sillich).

D.B.228.—*A tanto amor* (76) (*Favorita*), Donizetti, and *Là ci darem la mano!* (*Don Giovanni*), Mozart. (With Pini Corsi).

CLASS 4.

(ALL CRIMSON RAMBLERS.)

D.B.211.—**Epitalamio* (*Nérone*), Rubinstein, and *O Febea pur essa* (*Quo Vadis*), Nougués.

D.B.206.—**Mia sposa sarà la mia bandiera*, Rotoli, and *Amica, l'ora attesa e questa* (*Quo Vadis*), Nougués.

D.A.127.—*La Mantilla* (in Spanish), Alvarez, and *Vittoria, Vittoria!* Carissimi.

STANDARDISATION OF PITCH

The desirability of having a common standard of pitch for all musical instruments will not be questioned by anyone in the world of music. But the practical difficulties attending the establishment of an international, or even a national, standard have so far proved insuperable. There is always a temptation for a player to have his own instrument set at a higher pitch than the normal, since by that means he can obtain a special brilliance of tone. The main difficulty, however, is the fact that the pitch of wind instruments, including the organ, rises by about half a vibration per second for each degree Fahr. rise of temperature.

For purposes of comparison, the pitch, reckoned in vibrations per second, of the note A above "middle C" is taken as the basis. The first attempt to stabilise pitch was made by the French Government in 1859 by the establishment of the "Diapason Normal" at A435, 59° F. This standard gradually gained ground throughout Europe, but in 1896 the Philharmonic Society found that instruments made to the Diapason Normal pitch actually had a performing pitch of A439, 68° F. The difference, of course, was simply due to the difference of temperature. This latter was therefore adopted as the future standard and pianos and other instruments not affected by temperature changes have been tuned to this pitch. Apart from minor individual variations, this Philharmonic pitch has remained as the standard orchestral pitch in England. The British Army, however, has, by regulation, maintained the old Philharmonic pitch established in 1846, of A452·4, 60° F., and brass bands generally have had an even higher standard. As a result, the clarinets or trombones, etc., used for a band have been totally unsuitable for use in an orchestra. It is possibly for this reason that the pitch of orchestral instruments during the past ten years has tended to rise again, and confusion has begun to reign once more.

The music industries of America are now making an attempt, at all events in their own country, to put an end to the confusion, by establishing a new standard pitch at A440, 68° F. It is difficult to understand why they should choose this as standard rather than the Philharmonic standard of A439, 68° F. A difference of one vibration per second between two instruments is sufficient to cause "beats" and to modify tone-colour quite appreciably. The new standard, however, has been strongly recommended by an influential committee, so presumably there is some very good reason for the change.

British manufacturers are being urged by their American confrères to adopt the new standard and no doubt the Federation of British Music Industries will take the matter up. But it is doubtful whether very much progress will be made so long as the Army Council adhere to their own standard. The decisive step is really with the Government and in these times of financial stringency it is not very likely that the large amount of money necessary to convert existing military instruments to the new standard will be immediately forthcoming. P. W.

CREDE EXPERTO

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By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

XI.—THE NEW RECORDING (*continued*).

AT the end of our previous article on the new recording, we remarked that gramophone combinations which we had found to be most successful with the old recording seemed unsuitable for electric records. Since that was written we have collected additional evidence pointing to the same conclusion. No doubt many of our readers have been puzzled, and perhaps amused, to read statements from the Editor and from ourselves which on the surface have seemed quite contradictory. These differences of opinion have been but pale reflections of the disagreements amongst gramophonists generally, but they have been very disturbing none the less. Each side has had sufficient confidence in the other to believe that the differences have been due not to mal-observation or to difference of outlook but rather to some fundamental difference in the instruments we have used, and in the conditions under which our tests have been made. This belief on our part has been strengthened by the fact that we have found ourselves in complete agreement with the Editor on the qualities of the records which he has reviewed. The electric records of the last few months have been greatly superior to the earlier recordings, though we find that even the latter, *when played on a suitable combination*, are much better than we were at one time inclined to think. The Columbia records of the *Symphonie Fantastique* and the H.M.V. records in the new Wagner series deserve every word of commendation which the Editor has given them. Indeed, we believe that even he has not heard them reproduced at their very best. But, and we regret to say that there is a but, most gramophones fail to do them anything like justice. We have received a number of complaints, for example, that the later electric records are unplayable with fibre needles, and are cut up after the first few playings with steel needles. That this is the case with many machines we do not doubt; the large lateral oscillations and the increased number of overtones recorded by the electrical process make the groove very difficult to follow. The quieter passages are reproduced with comparative ease, but on the heavy passages the ordinary machine fails lamentably. Some passages are difficult even for the best combinations. The walls between the grooves are so thin in places that it takes very little to break them down; some of them, indeed, seem to be broken down in the actual pressing, so that it is not uncommon to find one copy of a record play well whilst another fails. For this reason we are inclined to think that the recording companies would be well advised, for the present at any rate, to tone down the heavier passages. We realise that this would detract from one of the great virtues of the electric records, namely, the closer approximation which they get to actual playing conditions in the *ff* and *pp* passages. But at the moment, and until reproducers are more fully developed to accord with the new system, the fact that heavy passages quickly wear out on existing machines is too important a consideration to be ignored.

As the Editor remarked in the June issue we have been engaged for some time upon a study of electrical recording, and of the proper conditions for reproducing the records made by that process. As a result we are able to say definitely that our suspicions regarding the reason for the disagreement between the Editor and ourselves were well founded. We do not in the least regret this difference of opinion since it has served to bring into prominence what we now regard as perhaps the most important principle of gramophone design, namely, that the soundbox should be tuned to suit the amplifier. Our previous articles will show that we stressed this point for old recordings. We find that for new recordings it is more important than ever, but *a different sort of balance is required.* There appears, too, to be a very important distinction between the old records and electric records. To get really good results from the former different sound-boxes were required for different types of record; with the latter, one sound-box, properly tuned, will give very good all round results though it may differ with records made at different times (or by different recording instruments).

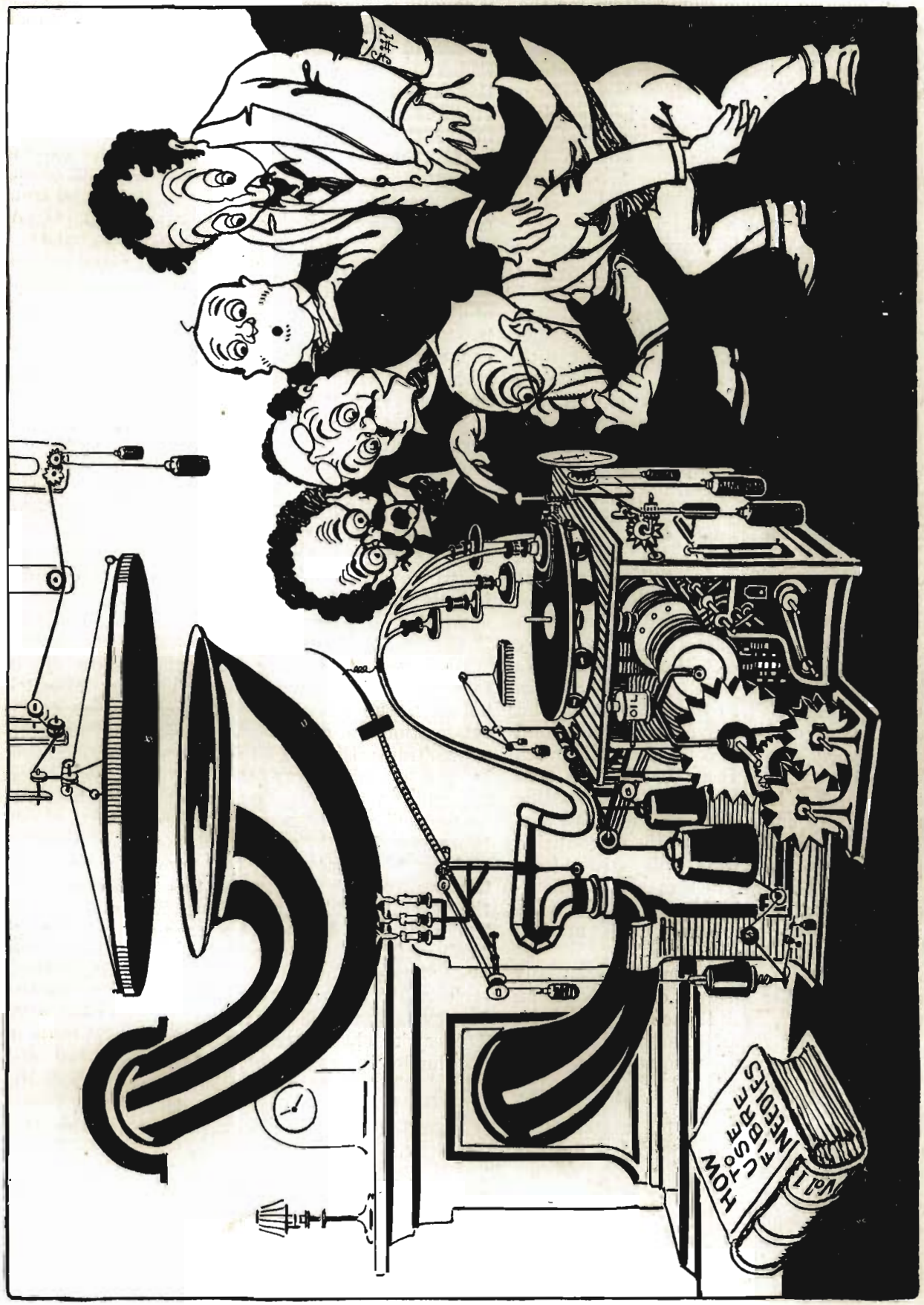
We have remarked before that gramophones and sound-boxes of the same model and outward appearance may differ fundamentally in their acoustic properties. For example, it is difficult to find two No. 2 sound-boxes which are exactly alike; and so far as our observation goes the variation in No. 4 sound-boxes is equally marked. Similarly the different models of the new H.M.V. machines give different results with the same No. 4 sound-box. It seems that for new recording the average No. 4 sound-box is more likely to suit Model No. 511 (which is the Editor's) than the others; experiments made by one of us suggest

that for the smaller models the diaphragm is probably too thick and the distance between the diaphragm and the back plate too great; whilst for the models with a longer horn a smaller sound-box seems to be desirable. Up to the present our best results have been obtained with small sound-boxes on machines with large amplifiers. The larger the amplifier the easier it seems to be to adjust a small box to give good results. We have found it extremely difficult to adjust a small box to suit machines (such as table models of the old pattern) with small amplifiers. We see no reason to doubt that it can be done but it will require delicate workmanship and accurate tuning. The margin of safety with a large amplifier seems to be much greater. In this respect the conditions which apply for old recordings seem to apply equally well to electric records. As time goes on we may have to revise our views upon this as we have upon other matters connected with gramophone design. For example, we have not been able to do justice to electric records with sound-boxes, whether small or large, with stiff cross-tension springs. But our view remains unaltered that for really satisfactory results a large amplifier is necessary; with it a small sound-box (*i.e.* one with a diaphragm not more than 50 m.m. in diameter) can be tuned to give better results than a large sound-box. Some of our best results have in fact been obtained with diaphragms of only 40 m.m. diameter.

We have previously called attention to the fact that whereas the old recording instruments were only uniformly responsive to a short range of pitch, the effective range of the new electrical system is much more extended. The improvement has been due not merely to the replacement of the old recording horn by a microphone and an electric transmission line. That has been tried many times in the past, and abandoned. Microphones and other electrical instruments have qualities of resonance to particular frequencies just as much as mechanical instruments; they will emphasise vibrations of certain frequencies and attenuate others just as effectively. The horrible distortion produced by so many radio sets is sufficient evidence of this without any theoretical argument. The success of the new system is due to far more complicated reasons. It is not by any means a mushroom growth, or an accidental discovery. We have traced its development so far back as 1903, when Dr. G. A. Campbell wrote an article in the *Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science,* and probably its roots go back even farther than that. For a full comprehension of the scientific principles of the system a knowledge of advanced mathematics is necessary. Those of our readers who are suitably equipped in this respect will find the complete story described in a series of articles by Dr. Campbell and Dr. Otto Zobel, in the *Bell System Technical Journal* for 1923, and in the following British patents held by the Western Electric Company: 142115; 151140; 221792; 231216; 231409 and 231410. The description of the actual recording instrument is given in patent No. 231410, but the prior patents are necessary for a complete understanding of the system. All of them are apparently derived from an elegant mathematical solution by Dr. G. A. Campbell of a .problem in advanced electricity.

The problem which Dr. Campbell solved related to the transmission of high frequency electric currents. As an electric current passes along a cable or through an electric circuit, its strength is invariably diminished. With high frequency currents the attenuation varies with the frequency. This has been a source of trouble to telephone engineers for many years. The telephone transforms sound-vibrations into electrical high frequency currents; sounds of a particular pitch produce a current of corresponding frequency. The unequal attenuation in the course of transmission introduces distortion and the sounds reproduced by the telephone receiver are therefore different in character from those received at the transmitter. It had occurred to a number of electrical engineers that this defect might be overcome by a suitable use of induction coils and electrical condensers, but this notion did not find much support amongst the leading electricians, including Heaviside. Dr. Campbell, however, showed that by using a transmission line consisting of a number of sections each with an inductance and a capacity in series with the line, and with an inductance and a capacity in parallel and connected in shunt across the line, it would be possible to transmit, with equal attenuation, currents within two ranges of frequencies and to suppress currents of frequencies outside those ranges. By suitable choice of the inductances and capacities the range limits could be determined in advance and the cut-off at those limits could be made extremely sharp. Thus if one upper limit were fixed at 2000 cycles (vibrations per second) a current of that frequency could be transmitted with small attenuation whilst one of frequency 2100 cycles could be reduced to less than 3 per cent. of its original value. Dr. Campbell also showed that there were five ways, theoretically, in which the two ranges could be reduced to a single range. These are fully described in Patent No. 142, 115, and form the basis of the Campbell "low-pass electric wave-filters." The general theory was applied also to the design of an "attenuation equaliser" as described in Patent No. 151, 140. The object of this is to correct the distortion introduced by other instruments into the transmission system.

These inventions permitted the use of a micro-



[*E. Squire*

OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE
Waiting for the First Note

phone and an electric transmission system for the transference of vibrations without distortion from the theatre or concert hall to the recording studio. But they were not sufficient in themselves to produce a recording instrument which should give a uniform response to a wide range of pitch. The electrical problem was solved, but there still remained the possibility of mechanical distortion due to the moving parts of the actual recording instrument. This difficulty was overcome by the design of a mechanical wave-filter which does for mechanical vibrations what the electric wave-filter does for high frequency electric currents. In the result it was found possible to construct a recording instrument which would transmit, without appreciable distortion, vibrations of frequencies lying within the range 80 to 8000 cycles and cut off all vibrations with frequencies outside that range. We believe, though we have no direct information on the subject, that up to the present the cut-off has been in the neighbourhood of 5000 cycles. This would have the effect of suppressing most of the "hiss" made by the recording instrument—and this is responsible as a rule for more "surface noise" than the friction of the needle on the finished record. Incidentally, it would also make high violin notes fluty and turn a delicate sibilant into the sound made by a person swilling cold tea in his mouth. Lord Rayleigh found many years ago that a sibilant has a characteristic frequency of the order of 10,000 cycles. Many violin notes have a pitch of over 1,500 cycles (rather more than 2 octaves above middle C) so that the fourth and higher harmonics would be of over 6,000 cycles and would be completely suppressed by a recorder with a cut-off at 5,000 cycles. It is therefore as true with electric records as it was with the old recording that an avoidance of surface noise, other than that due to the mere frictional contact of the reproducing needle upon the record, means a departure from fidelity. It should, however, be remarked that surface noise will in any case be less noticeable with electric records, since there are more musical notes recorded and reproduced.

The recording system, then, consists essentially of a microphone or other receiver connected to an electric valve amplifier, and thence by telephone wires to the recording room. The whole system is adjusted by an attenuation equaliser so that currents within the pre-assigned range of frequencies are transmitted evenly. The current then passes through another valve amplifier in which the amplification can be adjusted as desired, and finally to the electro-magnet of the actual recording instrument. The cutting stylus of the recorder is attached to an iron armature, which can oscillate between the pole pieces of the electro-magnet. This armature is connected to a mechanical transmission line which has the effect of making it equally responsive to vibrations within the desired range of frequency. Thus by proper adjustment the motion of the armature and therefore of the cutting stylus may be made to correspond closely with the currents received and therefore with the sound vibrations which excited the receiving microphone in the theatre and concert hall.

It is important to notice that this system of recording demands very delicate instruments and very accurate adjustment. Distortion may occur either in the electrical or in the mechanical transmission line. Each of these consists of a number of sections for which the values of the inductances and capacities in the former and of the masses and elasticities in the latter have to be carefully balanced. Moreover, the inductance of a coil, the capacity of a condenser, and the elasticity of a spring are only constant within certain limits. So that even if the instruments are experimentally adjusted so as to give a level response over the desired range of frequencies when transmitting vibrations of one amplitude they may be out of adjustment for the transmission of vibrations of another amplitude. Fortunately springs and other similar mechanisms may be made to obey Hooke's Law within a very wide range and the popularity of wireless has encouraged the development of inductances and capacities, and other electrical apparatus of high quality so that this difficulty is not insuperable.

But apart altogether from the values of the inductances and capacities used in the electrical network, the *resistance* of the conductors causes attenuation and distortion. Similarly in the mechanical transmission line friction causes attenuation. In the ordinary way this is not of very great moment, but there is one place where it is bound to be particularly disturbing. We refer to the resistance which the cutting stylus encounters in making the groove in the recording wax. Its importance here lies in the fact that the greater the lateral oscillation the greater the resistance. This resistance depends to a large extent upon the quality of the recording wax, and upon the shallowness of the groove and the shape of the cutting stylus. Perhaps the explanation of the recent improvements in electric records is to be found here. The earlier electric records were most at fault in the louder passages, particularly those of high pitch. This is where the resistance of the recording wax would have its greatest effect. The energy transmitted by a vibration varies as the *square* of its amplitude and as the *square* of its frequency. The effect of the resistance will therefore vary with the pitch and with the loudness of the note. This consideration, apart altogether from the physical difficulties of reproducing, suggests that if the loudness of gramophone reproduction is to be increased to such an extent as to be comparable

with the original performance, then some means other than an increased lateral oscillation of the stylus must be looked for. To increase the resistance of the amplifier (adjusting the sound-box accordingly) will extract more energy from any record. But there must be a limit to the amount of energy which the present disc record is capable of transmitting without undue strain. The most hopeful prospect at present lies in the introduction of electrical reproducers designed after the manner of the electrical recorders. In that case the requisite energy would be supplied by valve amplifiers, the disc record being used merely for directing and controlling the energy supply. The disc could then be very lightly engraved and would last much longer even than the present records. There is no theoretical reason why such an instrument should not be produced even now. How far it would be successful under the control of an ordinary amateur is more doubtful. Perhaps the experience gained by the recording companies in balancing the new recording instrument will enable them in due course to design an electrical reproducer which will be both stable in performance and simple in operation. After all, practical experience in these matters counts for a very great deal. The new recording was made possible by a number of patents based on theoretical calculations, it is true; but the application of laboratory models to everyday commercial practice is a very different affair. The practical difficulties which the recording companies have had to grapple with must have been tremendous. That they have succeeded so well and in such a short period of time is a great tribute not only to the competence and enthusiasm of the research and recording staff but also to the public spirit and business acumen of the management. All of us who are interested in the improvement of recorded sound owe them a very real debt of gratitude for their efforts. It is the custom, if not the privilege, of the British public to grumble. But for the good things which have already been vouchsafed to them, and which, in the near future, will be provided in even more abundance, gramophonists should have nothing but praise and thanks.

The Vocalion Portable. Price £4 17s. 6d.

We have just examined one of the new Vocalion portables. The machine is neat and compact, convenient to handle, and thoroughly well made. It has the additional advantage of playing with the lid closed.

The tone is vigorous and of good carrying power. In a small room it is inclined to be on the hard side, but that is not by any means a disadvantage for a machine which is most often used in the open air. One very rarely comes across such good quality in a machine of so small dimensions. The clarity and definition are quite remarkable.

The motor runs silently and sweetly, but though it lasts out a 10-inch record comfortably it is not quite strong enough to take a full 12-inch record at one wind. The tone-arm is of the "straight" pattern with a sleeve joint at the middle so that the weight on the record is not excessive. It is of the small bore type and is connected to a reflex amplifier similar in style to those in Waveola machines and in the new H.M.V. portables. This type of amplifier is very successful for portables and small machines generally, though the smallness of the opening does not permit of that resonant tone and "body" which one expects to get from large amplifiers. The needle-track alignment is exceptionally good.

The new Orchorsol Sound-box. Price 50/-

We are giving the modified form of the new Orchorsol sound-box a thorough test. It looks rather a complicated affair, but is really quite simple to fix and adjust. We are not able at the moment to give a full report, but we can say at once that the effect of controlling the flexibility by means of the new device is not by any means a figment of the imagination. It really does alter the tonal qualities quite appreciably.

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THE INDEX *to the* THIRD VOLUME

Reviewed by SYDNEY GREW

"REVIEWED with repeated astonishment" could quite reasonably have been the second phrase of this title, for yet again am I amazed at the multitudinousness which marks the Index of the yearly volume of this paper. Dr. Samuel Johnson did not know that six-syllable word. There was, perhaps, no need for it in his time. But if he had known of these Indexes (or *Indices*, if we must be scholarly), he would have wanted the word, since nothing less polysyllabic could express the quality of detail and variety which gives them their character.

Here are nearly eleven double-columned pages of the size of THE GRAMOPHONE, packed with names of composers and performers and titles of pieces. And an individual work may have a dozen of references—in the case of *Tannhäuser* nearly two dozen—so that the gramophonist can follow with ease the path trodden during the year by all the writers of the paper who have had occasion to speak about it.

Not all the things said about the work will, of course, be supremely wise; and in the nature of things a periodical designed to serve current conditions cannot say all there is to be said on a given subject: yet these Indexes show clearly that a mass of most important material is embodied in the volumes, which every earnest gramophonist should have by him in the way he has a railway guide, a dictionary, and a telephone directory. We are constantly buying records that are two or three years old. Perhaps the sale of good records is larger in the second and third years than in the actual year of publication. We want information about a record when the record is new to us, however old it may be in itself, and it seems to me that practically nothing of real value has been sent out during the past two or three years, but has found mention in the volumes of this paper already completed, and thence in the Indexes. I am not concerned to push the sale of the volumes; but I am concerned to press on intelligent amateurs the advisability of their owning them, as I should press the advisability of owning a good dictionary of music and a text-book of musical terms. This new Index is a guide to the friend who may help one to become something of a philosopher in the art of music. We must have a *philosophy* at the back of our pleasure, else it cannot be sound. Adam, the old theologians said, although created in a state of innocence, came into the world with an active philosophy, since otherwise he couldn't have given things their right names; the new amateur of music is not so safely gifted as Adam, and he should therefore avail himself of the help here afforded.

I think the names of the makers ought to be given at the head of the Indexes. That marvellous volume, the contents guide to the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," is enriched with the names of its compilers, Janet E. Hogarth and J. Malcolm Mitchell; and they deserve the recognition, since it is a more taxing business to make a good and complete index than to write the book indexed. No doubt this present undertaking is carried on month by month, the notes made currently being assembled at the end of the year; yet it is none the less a laborious task that only a praiseworthy devotion may bring to a successful issue, and so I suggest to the Editor that he append here a footnote stating who are the Index makers. Gramophonists the world over will then be able to mention them whenever a generous thirst makes a toast doubly sincere.*

Having once been by profession a critic, I am happy to have a small matter to which I can point the superior finger of correction. I see that we are guided to the Editor's contributions by the cross references "Mackenzie, Compton. See under Editor" and "Compton Mackenzie. See under Editor." This is all right. But when I look for "Bantock," I see nothing, nor when I look for "Martin." For the one is set among the G's as "Granville Bantock" and the other among the E's as "Easthope Martin." "Vaughan" in the name Ralph Vaughan Williams is a Christian name; yet the owner of the name is universally known as Vaughan Williams, and so his index-place is among the V's. Not so the other two composers. They are Bantock and Martin, and their place is rightly in the section devoted to their initial letter.

It is interesting to see the relative frequency with which great names appear in these pages; indeed, it is highly instructive, for THE GRAMOPHONE is in a way a key to the state of musical culture in the new world of gramophonism. Bach beats Handel by 12, their respective number of references being 64 and 52. Haydn receives only 32 references, Schumann 35, and Mendelssohn 45. Gounod, I am happy to see, receives no more than Schumann, and Liszt has but 21. There are 39 for Grieg and 31 for Franck (this last is splendid!). Delius, to our (only temporary) disgrace, has 7, but Debussy has 44. Vaughan Williams surpasses Elgar—37 to 34, and Holst does not do badly with 19. There are 57 for Brahms, 79 for Strauss, and 81 for Verdi. The

* *Note.*—As the generosity extends only to the reader's thirst, the Helots prefer to remain anonymous.—ED.

delightful Schubert wins to 88. Beethoven, the great master, is mentioned 132 times, and Wagner 181. Pride of place is fittingly held by Mozart, with 218. This is magnificent, even allowing for the fact that Mozart's music comes better from the gramophone than any other.

The Index makers bring forward 18 references to "Ballads," and then they avail themselves of *et passim*, which in this connection is the Latin for "done up." Makes of gramophones to the number of 24 are spoken of in this third volume of the paper. The busiest recorders, or the most popular performers, are Mattia Battistini, Caruso, Chaliapine, Galli Curci, Clara Butt, Elena Gerhardt, the Lener and London String Quartets, Kreisler, Edith Lorand, Albert Sammons, John McCormack, Riccardo Stracciari, Marcel Journet, and Frieda Hempel, the latter the most voluminously noted. There is no reference to Pablo Casals.

The "Note" introducing the Index has this clause: "Compositions will be found under the names of their composers."

The low intellectual level of the gramophone world a few years ago was proved by the way compositions were always listed, either under their own names or under those of the persons performing them. The name of the composer of a piece, like that of the author of a stage-play, was treated as something quite inessential. Recent catalogues have partly altered this. They are so arranged that in the case of a number of well-known composers we can discover what works of theirs are to be found in the catalogue.

This indicates that the intellectual level of our world is rising. It shows that we are beginning to think of the music, not of the performer only, and that the composer is acquiring individuality in our minds. As things are among amateurs, the practice of cataloguing and indexing under the name of performers will, perhaps, always have to be retained. But the record-making companies ought to be asked to give in their catalogues a guide to every composer, so that those of us whose interests in music are thorough-going may be able to find what we want. The present Index gives full information of every performance. It tells us that during the year of June, 1925–May, 1926, Robert Radford, for instance, made seven records which happened to come within the range of observation maintained by THE GRAMOPHONE, and it directs us to the pages where the records are described. But it occupies none of its space with information of Radford's pieces. The Index makers, however, are not yet thoroughly consistent. Here and there they slip into the old manner, as when they place the Suppé overture, *Poet and Peasant*, among the P's not among the S's. And they make an unwelcome use of the item "Other Works." I read with great interest the list of compositions by Grieg, Handel, Schumann, and am delighted to see that this, that, and the other piece is available; but at the end I am brought up against this blind spot of "Other Works," and I cannot observe the full extent to which the composer is represented without spending some time in following up the references. Every work should be named.

Furthermore, I believe the Index should be made sectional. It should be thrown into three principal departments: (i) General articles; (ii) composers, with lists of compositions and references *passim*; (iii) performers.

And now to end on a note of unqualified praise. The type used is a pleasure to the eye, and the contents are displayed to perfection, so that the item you are looking for seems to lift itself forward to your notice.

SYDNEY GREW.

The

Midland Musician

Founded by ADRIAN C. BOULT.

Edited by SYDNEY GREW.

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CONTAINS descriptive accounts of all works played during the month of issue by the City of Birmingham Orchestra (with particulars of GRAMOPHONE RECORDS of the same); general articles by such writers as Gustav Holst, Sir Landon Ronald, the Editor, Dame Ethel Smyth, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Neville d'Esterre, Eva Mary Grew, A. H. Fox-Strangways, Granville Bantock, Katharine F. Boult, Manuel de Falla, etc.; extensive REVIEWS of GRAMOPHONE RECORDS and new books; current news and comments; and a large amount of matter of PARTICULAR INTEREST TO GRAMOPHONISTS.

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The First Half-Year's Band Records

By W. A. CHISLETT

THERE has been a curious dearth of brass band records during the last six months. Only two have reached me, and these are both by Besses o' th' Barn Band on Regal Nos. G.8562 and G.8574 respectively. The latter contains two sacred airs which do not appeal to me as brass band music, though both playing and recording are good. The better of the two sides of the former is *After Sunset*. This is tuneful light music, and provides a very fine exhibition of delicate playing. I see by the catalogue that the soloists of this band have recorded *Dot and Carrie*—a cornet duet—and *Hailstorm*—a cornet solo—but by some mischance this record has not come my way, I am sorry to say, as both these pieces are very brilliant and should suit the new recording process admirably.

To compensate for the lack of brass band records there has been a plentiful supply by military bands, and among these are included so many good ones that my ultimate task of selecting the best is proving very difficult. The steady output of new recordings has enabled everyone to test them thoroughly, and if they are played under correct conditions the only possible verdict is that the new process is one of the biggest advances in the history of the reproduction of sound. Commencing shortly after the issue of the first of these records, I have kept up a regular correspondence with a very well-known and valued contributor to these pages, and good as many of these have been we have both made some very rude comments at times. I was, therefore, flabbergasted one fine morning to receive a letter in which he said that he had come to the conclusion finally that, like beer, new recordings could only be divided into two categories—good and better. (I make no apology for quoting this, as my correspondent recently quoted a facetious comment of mine in an article on new recordings.) His contention was that most of the old sound-boxes could not deal adequately with these new records, and to prove his case he very kindly supplied me with a sound-box specially made for the purpose. The result is that I have had to revise some of my earlier opinions, and while I cannot agree yet that there are only good and better, I am bound to admit that there are very few bad ones. I crave indulgence for this personal and somewhat lengthy dissertation, but without it I dare not have said what I am leading up to, viz.: that if anyone thinks after hearing any of the records I am about to mention that I have overrated the quality of the recording, it is more than likely that the fault is in their machine and not in the record.

Included in the outstandingly good new process records which have been issued during the last six months are the *Troop, Les Huguenots* (C.1256), by the Royal Air Force Band, and *Private Ortheris* (B.2299), by the Coldstream Guards Band, both issued by the Gramophone Co. I like the latter more as I hear it more. It is a very musicianly little work, and it is quite amusing to search for and identify traits in Kipling's famous character in the music. Zonophone have given us the *Trial by Jury Selection* (A.298), which is an excellent record in every way. The music is delightfully fresh and tuneful, the playing sympathetic, and the recording almost above criticism. The two best from the Columbia Company are the *Poet and Peasant Overture* and *Triana* (3844). When the former was issued I criticised the arrangement, and I still think that a solo saxophone is quite a wrong instrument to play the opening melody. The tone is too smug and fat in the lower and very reedy in the higher register, but, apart from this, which is after all a matter of opinion, the record is a very fine one. The latter is by far the most interesting march that has been published for a long time. The music is nicely varied in its character, and the recording is so good that it even beat the *Trial by Jury Selection* by a short head, and won a competition for military band records, decided by popular vote, at a recent meeting of one of the gramophone societies. The latest record by the Silver Stars Band, *Maritana Overture* (Regal, G.8603), is the best they have done so far and is very satisfactory in every way. Considering the popularity of this opera, as evidenced by the frequency with which it is played by the touring opera companies, it is rather surprising to find how rarely the overture has been recorded. *The Mikado Selection* (G.1025) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor Overture* (G.8586), played by this band, are well recorded, but in both cases the playing is only mediocre and the interpretation disappointing. The tempi and rubato in the latter are all wrong, while the former is played very heavily and stodgily and with singularly little gradation of tone. On the whole, and taking everything into consideration, I think the best of these records is *Trial by Jury Selection* with the *Poet and Peasant Overture* and *Private Ortheris* tieing for second place.

The outstanding feature of the records made

by the older process is the consistently high level of playing, recording and quality of music maintained by the Life Guards Band and the Vocalion Company respectively. I had a long and interesting talk about recording with Lieut. Eldridge a short time ago. The figures he gave me (which of course cannot be published) made me realise very forcibly what an appallingly large number of gramophone owners there must be who do not recognise a good thing when it is given to them. As the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE increases this number diminishes, but the process seems regrettably slow. Perhaps the most pleasing feature of the catalogue of records made by this band is the type of light music chosen to record. I hope that the selections from *The Merry Widow* (K.05288) and *The Country Girl* (K.05239) are the forerunners of many more reminiscences of the days when musical comedies really were musical. The latter, which is the most recent issue, is delightfully played, and those who remember the words of any of the songs will be pleased to find that the phrasing has not been distorted in the selection, but fits the words like a glove. I took the opportunity of my chat with Lieut. Eldridge to ask for more of these, and particularly for a selection from *Florodora* to be issued at an early date. Good as these records are, I think the palm must be given to Sullivan's *Ouvertura di Ballo* (K.05234). The playing is superb and the recording admirable.

The publication of new military band arrangements in this country is at a very low ebb just now, and this can hardly be wondered at when we find the band at Kneller Hall (the Army School of Music) descending low enough to play jazz on a music-hall stage, and that budding bandmasters are being taught there to play saxophones, banjos, and ukeleles! What is surprising, however, is that in America, the home of jazz, new and very fine arrangements for military bands are making their appearance every month. It is disappointing, therefore, to find that two American bands whose names appear regularly in the Aco and Brunswick catalogues respectively, never seem to make use of the opportunities offered. The U.S.A. 7th Regiment Band gives us nothing but marches—many of which are very good, it is true—while the band conducted by Mr. Walter B. Rogers only varies this monotony by interpolating a highly coloured descriptive piece occasionally.

The best record by the Welsh Guards Band is the *William Tell Overture* (G. 15899 and G.15900), which is a splendid five shillings' worth. They have made a number of good marches, of which *Invercargill* and *King's Escort* (G.15946) are the best. The latter also appears in the Beltona list, coupled with a very good rendering of *The Soldiers' Chorus, Faust.* This band has been strengthened recently by the enlistment of W. Ellison, who used to play solo cornet in the St. Hilda Colliery Band. The recording of his first solo, *Il Bacio* (G.15984) is rather muddy and dull, and does not do justice to his playing. The recent Pathé and Actuelle records have been of the average variety, with nothing particularly outstanding, the best being *Merrie England Selection* (Pathé 5236). The Duophone Company set themselves a high standard with their very first issue of records, and have done well to maintain this successfully. All the records made by Lieut.-Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's Band this half-year are good, and two are of superlative merit. *H.M.S. Pinafore Selection* (B.5114) is as good, if not better, than any selection from this opera that has been published, while the Haydn *Rondo* and Sullivan's *Graceful Dance* (B.5146) is dainty music very delicately played, and this record should find a place in all representative record libraries.

For the best of the records made by the older process, my vote is given to *Ouvertura di Ballo*, with Haydn's *Rondo* and Sullivan's *Graceful Dance* a very good second, but I must once more direct particular notice to those delightful selections from *The Merry Widow* and *The Country Girl.*

NOTE.—Since writing the above I have received two very good Imperial records. It is so long since I received any from this Company that I had begun to think that they had ceased to issue any band records. They introduce what is, I think, a new band to the recording room in the Honourable Artillery Company Band. While not quite up to the best Guards' standard, this band is very competent and well-balanced and possesses a capable conductor in Mr. Frank Gibbs. On No. 1603 are a brace of favourite marches—*Blaze Away* and *The Bullfighters.* These are rhythmically played and the brass tone is excellent. No. 1604 contains *The Wee McGregor Patrol*, which is played with good attack, and *Valse Septembre*, in which there are one or two lapses in intonation. In all cases the recording is good.

The same parcel also contained a selection from *La Traviata* played by the Life Guards Band (Vocalion K.05243), of which nothing better can be said than that it is up to the usual high standard of this band. The tone of the solo clarinet is particularly bright and pure.

W. A. C.

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC
Compiled by HERVEY ELWES. 6s. net (postage 6d.)
FROM
THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith St., London, W.1
ROBIN LEGGE in the *Daily Telegraph* says:—
"A most desirable book . . . Many of the criticisms drawn together under one roof, as it were, are of utmost value, the very crystallisation of criticism. The author has done his work well indeed."

RESULT OF JUNE COMPETITION

THIS has been a great success. Quite an army of silent readers have left cover and opened fire on THE GRAMOPHONE, replying to the questions which were put: What attracts them in it, what bores them, what exasperates them? But the fusillade has been for the most part one of rose-leaves fluttering down on the grateful heads of the Editor and his Helots; only a few barbed shafts have reached us, and even these had healing in their wings. The chorus of eulogy is chiefly for the editorial articles; next in honour comes Mr. Herman Klein in company with the other reviewers. The Forum and the correspondence columns are evidently welcomed; Mr. F. E. Terry, on Mozart, and Mr. Latham, on Wagner, are honourably mentioned; the translations are praised, and so, too, in a marked degree are the advertisements. It would do our advertisers good to hear how much they interest some of our readers!

The Expert Committee and Mr. Wilson come in for an almost equal burden of appreciation and abuse; so do the art supplements; and there is only one feature which is generally deplored—the gramophone societies' reports. Only very few competitors had a good word to say for them, and unless we get some champions to persuade us that the space given to these reports every month is well used, we shall have to consider seriously the curtailing or abolition of them in deference to the expressed views of the majority.

The first prize, Three Pounds' Worth of Records (winner's choice) goes to—

F. G. CURTIS,
6, Southfields Road,
London, S.W.18.

and the four consolation prizes, Fifteen Shillings' Worth of Records each, to E. J. WARBURTON, Salford Royal Hospital, Salford; A. L. GREEN, Hill Brow Lodge, Meads, Eastbourne; Mrs. EDITH M. BEESLEY; and A. L. CASSERLEY, 56, Broadwater Road, Tottenham, London, N. 17.

The best of the other letters were sent in by the Lady Elspeth Campbell, Edgar Smith, G. Smyth, Arthur Burgess, Mary C. Pollard, D. M. Hewitt, Tom H. Adams, W. Lindley, J. Wild, Ed. H. Dunham, Lily R. Hilton, H. W. Reynolds, and D. Watered. To these and to all the other competitors we are very grateful for what they have written and for the trouble which they have taken to express their opinions clearly.

THE WINNING LETTERS.

DEAR SIR,—I have never written to the editor of THE GRAMOPHONE before. Chiefly, I suppose, because the inarticulate nineteen-twentieths have never been invited to offer advice before; at least, with such an incentive!

Well, now, you ask for suggestions for the improvement of "our" paper. Here goes:

(*a*) Persuade, cajole, or bludgeon the "chief" into continuing his "Musical Autobiography." (*b*) Give a series of "Notes on the popular operas," suitable for use amongst our ignorant friends, when listening! (*c*) Use smaller type for "Crede Experto," and similar technical articles, allowing more space for what I may call (for lack of a better name) "entertaining" reading, such as the "Chief's" reviews and the "Forum." (*d*) Let *all* your critics sign their reviews, so that their opinions may carry full weight. (*e*) Consider the possibility of appointing local representatives (honorary, of course) who would be suitable and willing to undertake such work as: 1. Tactfully canvassing their friends to buy the paper, especially those musical but *sans* gramophones (with a view to conversion). 2. Soliciting the co-operation of dealers in *exhibiting* and *pushing* the paper. 3. Arranging gramophone recitals in aid of local hospitals, etc.

The above are merely germs, and are humbly offered for your practical consideration. It was not until I sat down to write I realised how fine our paper is, and how difficult it was to suggest improvements. I have so much to say "Thank you" for, it is hard to know how to begin. Prior to the birth of THE GRAMOPHONE I had bought a decent instrument, and was in process of acquiring musical taste, as well as records.

When I spotted the paper (in the window of the Paddington Sports Depot, Praed Street). I said "This is what I want!" Since then I have realised its value with increasing gratitude.

How "different" is our paper! In price?—yes, but how well worth it. In format, perfect (now the "ads" are not backing binding matter). Intensely interesting in matter, both to the musical enthusiast and him whose attraction is scientific. Above all, it is an *honest* journal, with brains behind it!

One of the best things it has brought me is the "Lifebelt." This has been the direct means of converting friends from pleasant toleration of my "weakness" to warm appreciation. Many have said, in effect: "I never liked the gramophone before, but *that* is lovely!" Mine is fitted to an uncut goose-neck (continental) with 2° error on a 12in. record, and the results, to me, are amazing. We sit in the next room, and indeed, it is difficult to believe it is "only a gramophone."

As a final comment on the paper I shall remain a reader unless the price exceeds 2s. 6d., although I cannot afford the N.G.S.!

In deep gratitude, and with my hat off,

I am, yours sincerely,
FREDK. G. CURTIS.

DEAR SIR,—I have never written to the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE before. I first came to know THE GRAMOPHONE as a reader in March of this year, and have thus seen only four numbers. At the first reading I was impressed with its worth, and I can only say that with further study I have become still more enthusiastic. I hold my opinions for the following reasons:—,

Firstly, the articles are very varied and deal with every aspect of the gramophone and its records, from educational articles on the music itself to those of a scientific nature on

the technique of gramophone playing. The articles are short, snappy, and well-written.

Secondly, the reviews are good, and unique in their style, forming an excellent guide to readers contemplating the purchase of any under review. Nothing of the kind one finds and expects to find in daily papers from the pen of the music critic, whose prime object seems to be to find fault (or invent it if he cannot) and express himself in sarcastic terms. One has the impression that the reviewer is offering an opinion in kindly terms and not foisting dogmatic views on the reader.

Thirdly, the advertisements in general are of interest, but especially useful is the collection under one cover of all the companies' latest issues.

Fourthly, reserved to the last for superlative comment, are the editorials, in their chatty, friendly, and free style, giving well-considered judgment on the recent records, obviously written by the expert who appears to be on speaking terms with every record ever issued.

The magazine is tastefully published and the reader is placed in an atmosphere quite different from that of any other magazine I know—unconventional, unorthodox, and in short, "chummy" air that many try but fail to create.

You ask for suggestions. Here are mine:

1. Cut down the gramophone society reports bya very large amount. I cannot believe that it is of very much interest to a reader, say, in Nelson (whether he be a member of the local society or not) to read that Mr. Brown at Hounslow provided a very enjoyable evening by giving a recital of his Brahms records. Mr. Brown has a good deal of local pride, I know, and is very pleased to see the activities of his society in print, but it is of no value to him or his fellow members, much less to anyone else. Substitute a society diary.

2. Allow more space for the Editor. The editorials read as though the Editor had more to say but no space to say it in.

3. Institute in regular serial form lists of records culled from all catalogues of the works of well-known composers with short notes and suggestions. Each list could deal with a group or groups of a composer's works, e.g., Beethoven's symphonies. This would be of interest and value to readers wanting to collect records of this group. Something in this style recently appeared on *La Bohème*.

4. An occasional article dealing with the technical side of record making would be of interest.

Of the rest, encourage the Forum and keep the Zephyrs blowing, and you will require no good luck!

E. J. WARBURTON.

DEAR SIR,—I have never written to you before, save on business only. With which formality duly accomplished, let us down to work. The most strikingly attractive feature of THE GRAMOPHONE is the frank and open spirit which pervades it throughout. Here is none of the lofty, dictatorial "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude of most publications; nor any suspicion of it being run as business line for commercial ends. From the first one senses a friendly invitation to all honestly interested in gramophonics to help, by suggestion or otherwise, in their advance. It is a focus of enthusiasm, giving encouragement to original experiment—a sure sign of vigorous health all the world over. Obviously wholehearted in the cause it advocates, THE GRAMOPHONE trenchantly supports anything in its favour, however obscure its origin, and boldly criticises any failings, even in the highest quarters. A fearless attitude and one good to behold.

Of the individual features, the editorial columns invariably inspire us with high hopes of important advances soon to come, and we would sadly miss these monthly surveys of the situation.

To Herman Klein we owe much joy; his descriptions of the circumstances of songs and singers, their place in music and in the life of their times, enhance many times the value of records, giving them a significance without which their full beauty would be lost. By his aid I have acquired record which rank amongst my favourites, notably the superb *Santa Lucia*.

For much the same reasons I value the articles on composers and personalities by other contributors, with the accompanying illustrations and exceptionally fine art supplements.

For the scientific brigade, so ably led by Mr. Wilson, I have a very wholesome respect, if limited comprehension; they torment me in every issue with the telling of countless ways in which my beloved instrument may be ailing, or of how it may be ruthlessly murdering the records. However, I have learnt from them how to detect and remedy cardinal errors, and on what lines experiment can be profitably pursued. For this and for the many hints I hope yet to glean from their columns I am duly grateful.

The correspondence and the various articles also show an eagerness which cheers. The advertisements fall into line with their surroundings, being attractive, helpful, and convincing; unlike the insane, empty voices of clamour commonly associated with their name.

The analytical reviews are liable to disappoint; often they are scrappy and contain much unwanted jargon about themes, motives, phrases, etc. Surely what is desirable is a clear account of the good and bad points of each record, so that we who buy so largely on THE GRAMOPHONE'S advice may know definitely what to expect.

In conclusion may I suggest that we have an article in the Herman Klein vein on "Lieder and the Gramophone"?

Now it remains only to compliment you on the paper, printing, and general arrangement of THE GRAMOPHONE, which are of unimpeachable taste; merely to glance at and handle the paper is a real pleasure. With all sincerity I thank you for what you have done, and pray you to continue in the same course. May you experience unbroken and increasing prosperity. You deserve it.

Yours faithfully,

A. L. GREEN.

DEAR SIR,—I have never written to the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE before, partly because I belong to the busier half of humanity, partly because, being a beginner in the study of recorded music, I am content to learn. But the challenge to that silent 85 per cent. must arouse even the humblest and most occupied of your readers and I hasten to answer your questions. First, and gratefully, let me say that the gramophone, aided by your paper, has added a new and glorious interest to life, and has rescued a love of music which years of dreary pianoforte practice had almost killed. That was a great day in March, 1924, when the first copy of THE GRAMOPHONE was encountered, and since then the first day of each month has been eagerly awaited.

What attracts me? The reviews of records, especially those of the Editor with his wonderful *flair* for discovering the things his public want to know—the analytical notes, the correspondence columns, the gramophone societies' reports, competitions like the Best Middle-Price Records, articles like the Editor's Unfinished Autobiography, and his Chamber Music series, Mr. Terry's analysis of the recorded music of Mozart, Armchair Phonatics (but please be simple, Mr. Wilson, one of your readers has only just discovered what alignment means!), the Lifebelt notes (glorious discovery!), and not least, the delightful literary flavour of the paper with its excellent English.

What bores me? Nothing, though I could do with fewer dance notes and bargain items.

What exasperates me? Only one flaw in its otherwise delightfully friendly spirit—that slightly superior and cynical attitude to my sex evidenced in some of last year's letters. I remember closing last August's number of THE GRAMOPHONE with, for the first time, a sense of distaste, but I am glad to

see that the less vocal, more impecunious and occupied part of the community are being allowed now to possess some musical intelligence and enthusiasm.

How to improve something so uniquely satisfying as THE GRAMOPHONE? I will venture on three suggestions:

1. For the sake of readers who can only afford a very few of the records recommended by your reviewers, it would be most helpful if we could rely periodically on a selection of the best record or records in each class as given by the editor last month for April and May, and if in the case of duplicate recordings your reviewers would always try (they often do) to indicate the best version.
2. I should also appreciate more analytical notes with music-type illustrations, such as Mr. Scholes contributed last year.
3. I have just scanned the pages of the July number, and my last and emphatic request is: Don't ever again let the Editor go away for a holiday without supplying his contribution first!

EDITH M. BEESLEY.

DEAR SIR,—I have never written to the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE before. Who am I that I should teach an editor his business or set the critics to rights? Like the psalmist, I do not exercise in great matters which are too high for me. Let others dispute learnedly of steel and fibre, of gadgets and needle-track alignment, of Wagnerian recitative and *bel canto*. I keep lowly my soul, humbly accepting the best that H.M.V., Columbia, Vocalion, Polydor, and Parlophone can give me, and making no fuss about the obvious deficiencies of mechanical music.

But now the Editor asks for new caligraphies, opinions, and suggestions. His demand must be complied with. He will not like my ugly fist, nor get swollen headed when I tell him that an organ like this is as indispensable to collectors of records as *The Times Literary Supplement* is to collectors of books, and that I do not think it could be better done than he is doing it. As to suggestions, those I would often make but for my afore-mentioned laziness (truth will out) generally get adopted without my stir. A month ago, for instance, I would have asked for a series of articles on Wagner, and here, in the June number, is the first of them. If I say I would like an examen of symphonies from Haydn to Elgar, with special reference to the recorded ones, I shall be told, probably, that something of the kind is already in type. One new feature would, I think, be particularly useful; that is a *detached* list of Opera Desiderata, with names of unrecorded pieces, proposed by members of the staff and seconded by readers. These should be returned to THE GRAMOPHONE by post and the recording companies could thus be informed that 50,000 gramophonists are wanting Weber's *Concertstucke* or *Tickletoes* fox-trot. Like this:—

OPERA DESIDERATA.

	Proposed by	*Seconded by*
Capriccio Brilliante, for pianoforte and orchestra (Mendelssohn).	C. M.	A. L. C., 56, Broadwater Road, N. 17.
Woodman's Song from *Hansel and Gretel.*	P. P.	—
Mercutio's *Queen Mab Song* from *Romeo and Juliet.*	P. L.	—

about a dozen suggestions a month, the most popular of which might be taken up by the companies.

As to pushing the paper, I think a small but prominent advertisement in concert and opera programmes might be remunerative, and why not have a page in the machine and record catalogues? A telling line in the advertisement would be "Candid Reviews of all New Records." That, after all, is the feature that nine in ten of your readers value most.

Nothing in THE GRAMOPHONE exasperates me. I am a patient soul.

Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR LANGMEAD CASSERLEY.

BOOK REVIEW

AN INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC. H. E. Piggott. (Dent, 6s.)

Were Mr. Piggott a music master, as self-confessedly he is not, he would scarcely have lent his authority to the statement on the wrapper of his book that "thousands of people who feel the charm and the power of music—at concerts, on the wireless, and by means of the gramophone—' without knowing anything about it,' can, with the aid of this book, *easily* acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge of music" (italics mine).

It is difficult to imagine the effect of such a statement upon the untrained, unaided adult. I visualise a number of persons, male and female—predominately female—who rise up from a perusal of this book, having suddenly discovered, from repeated meanderings over the pianoforte keyboard, that they can "compose." More ballads, more *morceaux*; good Lord deliver us!

The treatise is interestingly and clearly written and may well prove an excellent handbook for the student or the teacher.

Mr. Piggott's lack of experience as a teacher is shown in several ways. For instance, he nowhere stresses the need for player or student to get the idea of continuous progression to a point, in phrasing, into his head.

We all know the hundreds of amateur pianists to whom the bar line spells "stop, and look at the view"! Hence, so much unrhythmical playing. It may be objected that the book is not for executants. Well, do ordinary listeners really want to know about all these dry bones? Surely they can admire the human frame without dissecting it.

A small point: does anyone talk of the double bass as a contra-bass now-a-days?

I hope, perhaps, Mr. Piggott will give us a book, more on the lines of those by Percy Scholes, embodying the result of his musical researches at Dartmouth and on H.M.S. *Hood*. It should be interesting, as are all first-hand musical experiences. N. P.

The
BRADFORD FESTIVAL
of CHAMBER MUSIC
QUEEN'S HALL, BRADFORD
October 5th & 6th, 1926

The VIRTUOSO STRING QUARTETTE:
Marjorie Hayward — Raymond Jeremy
Edwin Virgo — Cedric Sharpe

WILLIAM MURDOCH *(Pianoforte)* — GWENDOLEN MASON *(Harp)*
LEON GOOSSENS *(Oboe)* — HAYDN DRAPER *(Clarinet)*
ROBERT MURCHIE *(Flute)* — JAMES LOCKYER *(Viola)*
AMBROSE GAUNTLETT *(Violoncello)*

Two days of chamber music under perfect conditions

PROSPECTUS MAY BE HAD FROM
Keith Douglas, Farfield Hall, Addingham, Yorks. — Ibbs & Tillet, 124, Wigmore St. W.1. — Wood & Marshall, 9, New Ivegate, Bradford

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Books on Music

The question of forming a judicious library of books on music is of great importance to the gramophile, as our correspondence constantly proves, and in the next number we hope to deal more fully with the subject than hitherto. Meanwhile a "comparative analysis of the interest in certain composers maintained during the past twenty-five or thirty years by the music-loving public who read books," is forwarded to us by Mr. Sydney Grew, who vouches for the reliability of the statistics. For every two persons who read books on Brahms, Haydn, and Tchaikovsky, three read those on Schubert and Schumann, four those on Chopin, Handel, and Mozart, five those on Bach, Mendelssohn, and Wagner; while no less than nine read books on Beethoven.

Music and Youth

There must be a great many grown-ups who read *Music and Youth* openly or furtively, and who admit to themselves that either children are astonishingly grown-up nowadays or else they themselves have retained their youthfulness unimpaired. What, for instance, could be more to everyone's taste than the "Music and Youth Concert Book," which one builds up with scissors and paste every month? It began in the June number, and few people who come across it will resist the lure.

Messiah Recoras

In view of Mr. Herman Klein's article on "Messiah and Elijah" in the February, 1925, number—which is well worth reading again at this juncture—it is fitting that he should review the new Columbia records of the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace.

Orchorsol

We have received a beautifully printed booklet about Orchorsol gramophones which makes good reading in the sanity of its outlook, but doubly good reading because the Orchorsol people give a full account of the tests held by THE GRAMOPHONE in 1924 and 1925, where the Orchorsol emerged from the ordeal with flying colours.

Nicolai Nadejin

The Chenil Galleries in Chelsea are the vogue still, and M. Nadejin, who gave a recital there with Olga Alexeeva on June 28th, had as large and enthusiastic an audience as any Sitwell or John. Ivor Newton was accompanying, and it is much to be hoped that many of the unrecorded songs which were heard that night by a few hundred votaries may be recorded by the singers for our wider public.

Emile Berliner

The invention of the gramophone is only one of Mr. Berliner's contributions to the amenities of modern life, and the publication of his biography is a matter of international interest. It is compiled by Frederick William Wile and Clara Louise Leslie and is published in America by the Bobbs-Merrill Company of Indianapolis. Doubtless it will soon be on the English market.

Worth Noting

Readers are always asking for more lists of good records out of the general catalogues. The following are the records used by Mr. Sydney Grew to illustrate his lecture on "The Art of the Gramophone" at Birmingham on June 8th:—

Malagueña (Albéniz), Cortot (piano), H.M.V., D.A.144; *Serenade* (Bantock), Muriel Brunskill, Col. 3876; *Casta Diva* (from *Norma*) (Bellini), Patti, H.M.V. 03082; *Hungarian Dance, No.* 2 (Brahms), Joachim, H.M.V., D.803; *Jota* (Falla), Tito Schipa, H.M.V., D.A.751; *Au Printemps* (Grieg), Grieg (piano), H.M.V., D.803; *Simon the Cellarer* (Hatton), Santley, H.M.V., E.82; *Violin Concerto in D major* (Mozart), Riele Queling, Parlo. E.10383–4–5; *Laudate* and *Exsultate* (Palestrina), Sistine-Vatican Choir, Parlo. R.20001; *Wenn die Rosen blühen* (Reichardt), Irmler Ladies Choir, Parlo. E.10269; *Tarantelle* (Sarasate), Sarasate (violin), H.M.V., E.183; *Der Rosenkavalier* (Monologue) (Strauss), Emmy Bettendorf, Parlo. E.10341; *Esultate* (from *Otello*) (Verdi), Tamagno, H.M.V., D.R.100.

Chinese *Mandarin Songs* and *Cantonese Songs*, H.M.V. (Special) 48078, 48014, 48009. (The Chinese records kindly lent for this lecture by Professor Granville Bantock).

English song: *John Peel*, Associated Glee Clubs of America (850 male voices), Col. 9048; Hebrew Liturgical Songs: *Eil Molei Rachmim*, Joseph Rosenblatt, Col. E.5126. Russian songs: *Church Bells of Novgorod*, Kedroff Male Quartet, Col. D.1530; *Crazy-headed John*, Chaliapine, H.M.V., D.B.691; *Monotonously rings the little bell*, Don Cossacks Choir, Col. 9085. *The Huntsman* (Dan Leno), Dan Leno, H.M.V., C.545; *Thoughts from the book*, "For Every Day" (Tolstoy), Tolstoy, H.M.V., E.158; *Laughing* (Klausen), Klausen, H.M.V., E.325.

Further illustrations were taken from: *El Puerto* (Albéniz), Wm. Murdoch (piano), Col. L.1707; *Land of Hope and Glory* (Elgar), Harold Williams and Chorus, Col. 9080; *Cubana* (Falla), Wm. Murdoch (piano), Col. L.1707; *Quartet in D minor* (Haydn), the Lener Quartet, Col. L.1741; *Eloheinu Velohei Avoseinu* (Hebrew melody), Berele Chagy, Col. E.4320; Overture to *Iphigenie in Aulis* (Gluck), Berlin Opera House Orchestra (Weissmann), Parlo. E.10376; Duets from *La Traviata* (Verdi), Hertha Stolzenberg and P. Hansen, Polydor 15745.

Church Programmes

Here, again, are two programmes given by Mr. S. S. Moore in Claines Parish Church, where a gramophone recital on Sunday afternoons or after evensong has become familiar; an example which might well be followed in other parishes.

I.

1. *Soul of the World* (*St. Cecilia's Day*) (Purcell), Leeds Festival Choir (1925), conducted by Albert Coates.

2. *Blessing, Glory, and Wisdom* (J. S. Bach), Choir from the Chorus of the British National Opera Company, conducted by Albert Coates.

3. From *Messiah*: (*a*) *Lift up your heads*, (*b*) *Worthy is the lamb* (Handel), the Royal Choral Society (800 voices), accompanied by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra (80 performers) and grand organ, conducted by Mr. H. L. Balfour; organist, R. Arnold Greir.

Recorded during the actual performance at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday, January 2nd, 1926.

4. *Grail Scene, Parsifal*, Act I. (Wagner). Parsifal, Walter Widdop; Gurnemanz, Robert Radford; Amfortas, Percy Heming; Titurel, George Baker. Chorus of the British National Opera Company and the Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates. The above scene was repeated at the special *Parsifal* recital on Sunday, March 21st, when booklets containing the complete story and describing each record were supplied.

5. *Mater ora Filium* (for unaccompanied double choir), Arnold Bax. Carol (from a manuscript at Balliol College, Oxford). The first performance of this work took place at the Leeds Festival, October, 1925. Leeds Festival Choir (1925), conducted by Albert Coates.

II. SPECIAL EASTER DAY PROGRAMME.

1. Organ solo, *Easter Hymns*, including *Christ the Lord is risen to-day* (G. L. Elvey), *Jesus lives!* (H. J. Gauntlet), *Jesus Christ is risen* (Lyra Davidica), *Alleluia* (*The strife is o'er*) (Palestrina), *Alleluia* (old Easter Hymn) (Köln 1623), *All people that on earth do dwell* (Old Hundredth), by Herbert Dawson, at Kingsway Hall, London.

2. From *Messiah* (Handel): (*a*) *Hallelujah Chorus*, (*b*) *Worthy is the Lamb*, by the Sheffield Choir, conducted by Dr. Henry Coward.

3. *Prelude*, Act III., and *Bridal Chorus, Lohengrin* (Wagner), Chorus and the Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates.

4. Pianoforte solos: (*a*) *Prelude in C sharp minor, Op.* 3, *No.* 2 (Rachmaninoff); (*b*) *Finale, Sonata in C major, Op.* 2, *No.* 3 (Beethoven), Mark Hambourg.

5. *Marche Slav, Op.* 31 (Tchaikovsky), Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski.

6. Air, *The Palms* (Faure), Peter Dawson.

7. Quartet, *Allegro* (Bittersdorf), Budapest String Quartet.

8. Prelude, *The Light of Life, Meditation, Op.* 29 (Edward Elgar), the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.

9. Organ solo, *Toccata* (Widor), Reginald Goss-Custard, F.R.C.O., at Kingsway Hall, London.

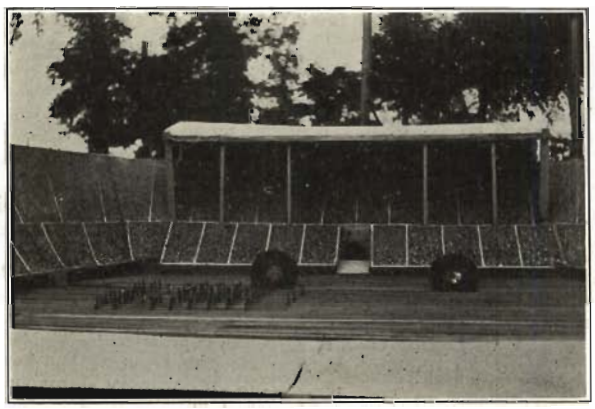
10. From *Elijah* (Mendelssohn): (*a*) *Baal Chorus*, (*b*) *Thanks be to God*! Chorus and the Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates (recorded in the Queen's Hall, London).

The Tattoo in Petto

At Claines, too, a novelty in the use of gramophone records is at this moment being given to the people of the Worcester neighbourhood. This consists of the Wembley Tattoo in miniature, performed in a model of the Stadium with toy figures and with the aid of the gramophone records of the original performance. It is said to be not merely a *tour de force* of ingenuity, but a really enjoyable performance for a summer afternoon in a vicarage garden; and the five gramophones which Mr. Moore has at his disposal are also used for the charming "nightingale record" and 'cello solo interlude, with which Mr. H. L. Rink has regaled so many audiences all over the country.

Bantu Phonetics

One of our readers, Dr. Clement M. Doke, senior lecturer in Bantu studies at the Witwatersrand University has recently written to us about Dr. Rudolf Lothar's Gramophone Year-Book (reviewed in May, page 557) and the important passage dealing with the use of the Dictaphone in the service of education. *The Times* for June 29th contained an account of Dr. Doke's expedition to Northern Rhodesia where he was to spend three weeks in the forest region studying Bantu philology and phonetics and obtaining material for the completion of his Lamba dictionary with the aid of a dictaphone. Those who remember Dr. Hans Pollak's article in THE GRAMOPHONE of April, 1925, about the Vienna record archives will again wonder what is being done in England to record the pronunciation of the language in various parts of the country for the use of philologists of the future. Is there no society which will undertake the necessary organisation on a comprehensive scale?



A TABLE WEMBLEY
(the 12-inch records show the scale)

Model Theatres

The first fortnight of this month is being devoted to an exhibition of some of the unique H. J. Webb collection illustrating "The Juvenile Drama," to be held by the British Model Theatre Guild at the Faculty of Arts Gallery, 10, Upper John Street, Golden Square, W. 1; August 2nd to 14th, 2.30 to 8 p.m. We gladly draw attention to this, and advise anyone who is even slightly interested in the drama from the historical point of view to write for particulars to Mr. Sydney E. Willes, 2, Rosedale Road, Forest Gate, E. 7. Tickets of admission, 6d. each.

Why I Don't like Chamber Music

The essay marked "D." in the July number (page 61) won by an easy margin of readers' votes from "A," and a set of the *Trout Quintet* records in album has been sent to Mr. W. J. Simpson, 23, High Street, Wall Heath, Dudley, in the hope that he, too, like Mr. John Locke, may be quickly converted to chamber music.

Mozart

Readers who went to the Gaiety Theatre during the short season when Mozart was being played there, will have noticed the part which our February Supplement—the Delafosse print of Mozart at the piano with his father and sister—plays. Nearly everyone on the stage goes to look at it on the wall, and there is much talk about it.

Any of the art supplements, including the coloured portraits of Mozart and Wagner, can be obtained from the London Office (6d. each, post free). Many of them are well worth framing.

Tuning the Lifebelt

The so-called "tuning control" which is fitted to the new Orchorsol sound-boxes can also be fitted to the Lifebelt to enable it to cope with the strain of the newest records. Lifebelters often find the flexibility of the rubber, however excellent on their gramophones for the old records for which it was designed, rather too great for the electric recordings, and it is to meet this difficulty that the Orchorsol people have devised a special form of tuning control. It is easy to fix, and by means of screws can be adjusted to reduce the flexibility of the Lifebelt to the exact point where reproduction is most satisfactory.

The Lifebelt wins

Messrs. R. H. Morris, of Cape Town, report that in a competition held there a Melophone fitted with a Lifebelt was the winner over a number of gramophones, including other Melophones which were without it. The test was made under similar conditions to those at the Steinway Hall two years ago.

Fibres

The Editor's italicised confession at the end of his article this month will give joy to Messrs. Daws Clarke and Co., who have always supplied him with Hall fibres.

Record Reviews

The cynics will be amused to find that some of the mid-July records are reviewed in this number both by the Editor and by the monthly critics.

Wagner

Mr. Peter Latham's third article, on the Wagnerian's record library, is held over to the September number.

Electric Recording

Polydors enter the electric field this month, and before long, no doubt, all the recording companies will follow suit.

Indestructible Records

The new Duophone Syndicate's so-called indestructible records are eagerly awaited, and it is a pity that they were not available for the summer holidays, since they will be not only cheap but very light. Carrying a parcel of records has never been the pleasantest part of a picnic, but if the "indestructibles" have the tunes that we want on them they will have enthusiastic support from paterfamilias, who will gladly lighten his purse to relieve the weight on his arms.

Prices of Records

Correspondents continue to bombard us with pleas for a reduction in the price of records; one of them has even sent a long list of records showing the number of inches of music and of mirror on each. If people write to us they surely write also to the recording companies in the same strain, and it is for the manufacturers to decide whether a further reduction in prices is advisable. There is a great deal which might be said at this juncture; but there are merits in discretion, and those of our readers who have followed us from the beginning will realise how generously—or, if you prefer it, how judiciously—the manufacturers have acceded to the demands of the public, as expressed in THE GRAMOPHONE, with regard to the contents and the prices of the records which they produce.

New Apollo Models

The Expert Committee have so much to say this month about electrical recording that there is no room for their report on the remarkable new cheap models (with a long internal horn of the Super IV. pattern, but made of fibrous material), which have been issued by Messrs. Craies and Stavridi. The pedestal model in solid mahogany only costs £12.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[*All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.*]

N.G.S. IN AMERICA.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I know that you have some American readers, and have no doubt that the number of them is already quite respectable, so that I feel that the advantages and benefits which the National Gramophonic Society is bringing to its members ought now formally to be introduced to them.

This letter, then, is to say that I should like to become acquainted with any or all American readers of THE GRAMOPHONE who would be interested in joining with me for the purpose of obtaining all advantages of concerted action in relation to the N.G.S. It is evident that if there is an organised U.S. group, shipments of records in common could be made, with distribution from one common point, saving duties, expressage, and ocean freights, and, generally, working for efficiency in every way.

Moreover, if once a parent group could be started in this country the idea might be expanded into local chapters, and in time it is probable that American recording could be brought into the scheme, with resulting advantages for the Society on both sides of the water.

At any rate, if you will give space to this letter, we may be able to get the names of all American readers who are interested. I shall be glad to act *pro tem.* as a sort of secretary until it can be seen what may be done.

Perhaps you will inform your readers of the interest I have shown in this matter, as evidenced by previous private letters to you. Sincerely yours,

209, South State Street, Chicago. WILLIAM BRAID WHITE.

[Since last December—see Vol. III., page 321—several cordial letters have been exchanged by Mr. White and ourselves; the cordiality, coming from so eminent a personality in the gramophone world of America, leads us to hope that something really useful and expansive may result from this letter.—ED.]

A PROTEST.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—If it is not possible for a letter to be published without parts of it being mangled beyond recognition, surely the unfortunate writer might be given the choice either of not having his letter published at all (greatly preferable) or of letting it appear in mangled form.

When, in addition, syntactic and delirious nonsense is made of one's words in the process, as in the case of the last sentence of your version of my letter, in the July issue, one cannot but protest loudly, and raise an "exceeding bitter cry"! Yours, etc.,

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI.

London, N.W. 1.

[Our correspondent deserves an unqualified apology. His handwriting baffled our printers and the proof-reader ignored the delirious nonsense of the last sentence in his letter on page 68. The last phrase should read: "apart from the *evidence of one's ears*."—ED.]

ANOTHER PROTEST.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMAPHONE (*sic*).)

DEAR SIR,—As the writer of the article in *The Clarion* from which Mr. Mackenzie makes a quotation in his contribution to the June number of THE GRAMAPHONE (*sic*), may I be allowed to ask him a question? I have read my article through again, and I note four errors in spelling made by the printer, three of which, strangely enough, occur in the paragraph selected by Mr. Mackenzie for quotation. He, in his turn, misquotes me and inserts a "not" in one sentence that entirely destroys its original meaning.

I did not see a proof of this particular article before it was printed, and so cannot be held responsible for the obvious mistakes. What prompted Mr. Mackenzie to choose this particular paragraph for quotation? And is this the only kind of reply he is capable of making to an opponent in an argument? If so, then I, for one, do not grudge him his "malicious pleasure." After all, one must console one's self somehow, I suppose. Yours very truly,

FLORENCE GAMON.

(South-East London Recorded Music Society.)

P.S.—In fairness to me you will agree that my letter deserves publication.

[Miss Gamon is mistaken in supposing that I chose that paragraph on account of the misprints it contained. THE GRAMOPHONE is too fragile a glass house for any of its inmates to throw such stones. The "sics" were inserted, as in the spelling of THE GRAMOPHONE above, in defence, not for offence. As it was, a negative crept in, for which we owe Miss Gamon an apology.

The reason why I quoted that paragraph was because it seemed to express perfectly the banality of an opinion to which Mr Newman's applause had given very unwholesome encouragement. Miss Gamon is evidently unaware that the most careful printer in the world could not have saved that paragraph from the pillory. "Where ignorance is bliss," etc.—C. M.]

JAZZ.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—There has come to my attention an English trade journal of recent date in which is an article entitled "American Invasion." The title was a bit jolting in its general effect; however, this contributor—whatever else he had in the back of his mind—simmered his subject down to an "aghast" at the invasion of American jazz that has swept over England like a musical cyclone, and he seemed to be clinging to a certain British brass band and the few other fragments of safe and sane music that remain, as a refugee clings to a few familiar keepsakes from the ruins of his demolished home.

To read the article was to feel at first trepidation, then amusement, then sympathy. Finally one seemed to look across and "see" him sitting there in a land of "ruined castles" alone with his memories of better music and better days.

This contributor should know that he is not alone in his feelings. There are many people in this country who would be glad to sit down to a cup of tea and a sandwich with him and swell the great tide of his convictions.

People did not complain at jazz during the war; in fact, it was during the war that jazz gained its full momentum. But a year or two later, as soon as the hectic atmosphere cleared a little there arose in this country a band of reformers who lit on jazz with the same vehemence and velocity that a jazz artist lights on the keys of a piano. Jazz was "demoralising," it was "conducive to immorality," it was "the distortion of real music." In every way possible they tried to de-code this acoustic phenomenon—to lay it bare and to educate people to "something better." And still jazz remains!

It has not driven out the old classics; rather we have *more* music, we have both kinds; but the musical census would show that nowadays there is a speed to things which allows less time for the "moods" of the old masters and the "plaint" of the former folk songs.

A couple of years ago I belonged to a musical organisation where one night a month the members met for the purpose of listening to and digesting music in every way possible. Through pictures, papers, and "executions" of various kinds of it, they devoured it. Sessions were devoted to a study of the music of different countries. One night our topic was "American Music." We were entranced with the dignity of MacDowell, the romantic tunes of Victor Herbert, the stirring marches of Sousa.

About the last thing on the programme that night was an essay on this very American music. It was read by the literary secretary of the club, who was also a solemn-faced church woman. On week days, when the church was "closed down," this woman spent all her spare time in the church kitchen paring potatoes for some community supper, or otherwise giving her time gratis for the general uplift of, or the helping-to-put-down of something of a more or less serious nature.

She impressed one as being a woman whose utter absence of beauty had just naturally driven her toward all the staid and stately things of life where gay frivolity could not get a chance to mock her.

In her paper she biographed and commented and inventoried and folk-songed about American music in a way that showed a grasp on the subject befitting one of her—intellect! Imagine our surprise when her paper wound up with an appeal for American jazz! "When people understand," she said, "that jazz is an art all by itself they will know how to accept it."

Her clear mind, not deflected by any vanities of view-point (inside or outside) was seeing right through things. "Jazz," she said, "is rhythm, and it is rhythm stepped-up. Just as a strong current has the power to gather much in its train and whirl it along in its own direction, so jazz is a powerful current, a current of rhythm, and whether we will or not, it is almost irresistible. Jazz is neither bad nor good—jazz is power, it is 'high frequency.' As sailors 'sing' together when they heave-in a heavy cable, so our boys took jazz with them into the war because they felt the strength that always comes from unity of vibration. In this miracle-working modern day we live in faster meter and jazz is the expression of that life."

She closed her paper with the lucid explanation that "American jazz is the syncopated language of a multi-racial land." Ever since hearing that paper I have "understood" jazz.

Yours faithfully,

Washington, D.C. CLARA LOUISE LESLIE.

BEETHOVEN SONATAS.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I observe that your correspondent, Mr. S. E. Willett, in making a plea for more Beethoven, states that of the thirty-two piano sonatas, we have only four complete works. May I therefore draw his attention to the Polydor catalogue, in which will be found eight sonatas, all uncut versions, as far as I am aware.

All told, there are nine sonatas in the various catalogues, viz.: *Pathetique, Op.* 13 (Kempff), Polydor; *Funeral March, Op.* 26 (Kempff), Polydor; *Moonlight, Op.* 27 (Kempff), Polydor; (Lamond), H.M.V. *G major, Op.* 49 (Murdoch), Columbia. *Waldstein, Op.* 53 (Kempff), Polydor; (Lamond), H.M.V. *Appassionata, Op.* 57 (Kempff), Polydor; (Lamond), H.M.V. *Les Adieux, Op.* 81a (Kempff), Polydor. *E minor, Op.* 90 (Kempff), Polydor. *A major, Op.* 101 (Kempff), Polydor.

I have the H.M.V. records, the Columbia, and most of the Polydor in my collection, and consider them all good from the point of view of recording, particularly the two records of the *Pathetique*. Indeed, I feel that these two discs are amongst the finest piano recordings extant, and only beaten, if beaten at all, by the very latest of the electric recordings. This opinion is shared by all my friends who have heard them.

All the Polydor piano records that I have heard reproduce very faithfully, but I single out the *Pathetique* records for special mention, not only because I think them to be the best, but because they seem to have received rather less than justice at the hands of your reviewer. His comment on the quality of reproduction was, if I remember rightly, to the effect that while the sonata opened splendidly, the quality was not maintained throughout the four sides. This surprised me greatly, for if there is one outstanding feature of this recording, it is surely its consistent quality from start to finish.

While on the subject of Polydors, I should like to point out that the price of the Class 4m records (to which the *Pathetique* and other Beethoven discs belong) is 5s. 9d. each, not 6s. 9d. as usually stated in your reviews.

To Mr. Willett's plea for more Beethoven, I would add another, for more Rachmaninoff piano works. This is a matter for H.M.V. to give their attention to, for this great composer-pianist is numbered amongst their "stars," and yet there have been practically no new records by him for a couple of years. This seems very strange, for he is one of the giants of the musical world, his touch and his Steinway piano are eminently suited to recording, and his compositions appeal to both the modern and classical school of music-lovers. As a start I would suggest half a dozen of the preludes, amongst them the magnificent *B flat major*, to be followed by a selection of the *Etudes Tableaux*. Come along, H.M.V., get on with the recording and let's have a disc in each monthly list! But for goodness' sake, no re-recordings until we have had a selection of new works. In any case, the existing records will compare favourably with most of the electric records issued up to the present.

Yours faithfully,

London, E. 3. HAROLD S. WILSON.

LONGER RECORDS.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As you are the gramophone's most conspicuous friend, I hope you will use all your persuasion to convince the various recording companies that a fifteen- or twenty-minute record is very urgently needed.

The radio has, in America at least, almost run the gramophone off the map. The reason for this consists, I think, in the radio's greater convenience and in its greater inexpensiveness. In using the radio one doesn't have to jump up every four minutes to turn the disc. The initial expense is just about the same as that of the gramophone, but after the first cost the radio is immeasurably cheaper. In fact, one can almost buy a new radio for the same price one has to pay for two or three sets of symphony records.

I think that 90 per cent. of the American gramophone dealers have installed radio departments in their shops. This shows fairly well the way the tide is turning. The only solution I can see is the longer playing record. What do you think about it?

In closing I cannot tell you the delight I felt when I first obtained a copy of THE GRAMOPHONE. Do you know that there are thousands of gramophone "fans" on this side of the Atlantic who have never heard of such concerns as Polydor and Parlophone, who have never seen a catalogue with anything in it but Italian opera and jazz, and who have never read a word of comment on any record other than the blah which has been furnished by the company making that record? THE GRAMOPHONE is badly needed in America.

Yours sincerely,

New Brunswick, U.S.A. WILLIAM H. F. LAMONT.

[The first number of our counterpart, "The Phonograph," of Boston, under the editorship of Axel B. Johnson, is announced for September 1st. We wish it the best of luck.—ED.]

THE B.N.O..C

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—There are several reasons why the B.N.O.C. season at His Majesty's in 1924 was a financial failure.

1. The international season at Covent Garden which was run at the same time was severe competition. The British season finished a fortnight after the Italian season, during which time they did good business, but too late to save them.

2. The tropical weather experienced at the time.

3. The gallery accommodation at His Majesty's is small and a veritable "Black Hole."

4. The charges for admission are regrettably too high; of course, this is necessarily so in first-class non-subsidised opera, such as the B.N.O.C. present.

There is now a much greater public for opera than there was then, and at 1s. to 5s. would certainly be well patronised.

That the poor response to the appeal to readers of THE GRAMOPHONE for subscriptions for the De Lara scheme is really due to lack of interest I cannot believe; to most readers a minimum of £1 is much too high; why not make it anything from a 1s.? This, I believe, would draw a generous response numerically and that would at least show interest.

Yours faithfully,

Hounslow. S. H. HOOK.

[The de Lara scheme is in a much more advanced state now than it was when we first urged our readers to subscribe to it through THE GRAMOPHONE, and before long everyone will be canvassed locally to subscribe in small or large sums. But if any reader is willing to give One Pound in instalments of a shilling or more a month we shall be very glad to *register* the offer, so that we may in due course show Mr. de Lara how widely he may count on the support of readers of THE GRAMOPHONE; but *for the present we do not want any sums of less than One Pound sent to this office.*

The guarantee that no money entrusted to us will be handed over to the de Lara Fund until the scheme is successful, and that if it fails the money will be returned intact to the giver, holds good. All offers should be addressed to us at 58, Frith Street, W. 1.—ED.]

ANONYMOUS CRITICS.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Cannot Mr. H. W. Crundell see that K. K. stands for Kompton macKenzie?

It he wants absolute proof let him compare page 543 in the May number where the Editor says: "As for me, if I knew how to *cock a snook* at . . ." with the article on page 574 by K. K.:

"There are some who might suggest . . . that Ravel was delicately '*cocking a snook*' at . . ." I am sure there are not two writers on THE GRAMOPHONE staff who would both use that outlandish expression (I don't know what it means!), unless they were the same person. Verb. sap. Q. E. D.—Yours faithfully,

Sonning Common, Oxon. JOHN GUNSTON.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Your correspondent in "Anonymous Critics," of June number, asks what "K. K." suggests to other readers. To me, he sounds "getting warm" when he goes on to mention the Editor, and the connection with F. Sharp, who I've read somewhere, is Mrs. Compton Mackenzie.

Now read the next letter, "Symphonic Jazz," signed "K. K." Isn't that our Editor talking? Particularly in this half sentence "I have not much use for the 'faint praise' type of damn, but I heave quite a hearty one at people who don't verify their references"!

This gives me an opportunity to give thanks to the Editor or K. K. for their opposition to jazz (music?) noise. How can anyone call discordant noise exhilarating? To me it's depressing, and if I had to listen to it, maddening.

I wish the Editor would put in a plea for the recording companies to issue the same operas on one disc, and not a song from one opera on one side, and a song from another on the other. Even people with plenty of money to spend on records, would, I should think, prefer this, as records could be kept in better order. And why will they send out a couple of songs on a 12in. disc which would easily go on a 10in.? To others, who, like myself, have to order from the lists, it's a sheer waste of money.

Finally, may I say, with reference to the June Compt. there is only one "improvement" I can suggest—that the Editor and reviewers do not write of records in such an alluring way, it's so bad for their readers' pockets. It will be interesting to see if any reader can possibly suggest any improvement, in any department to THE GRAMOPHONE. They would deserve the records!

Yours faithfully,

JUST A COUNTRY READER.

[Since the first number the Editor has never written in THE GRAMOPHONE except over his own name or his own initials. So much for internal criticism! If he had been reviewing records as "K. K." all these months, he might well be suspected of duplicity! The idea is really rather shocking.—LONDON ED.]

LARGE *v.* SMALL SOUND-BOXES.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Foster has all the skill of a politician in taking sentences from their context, in selecting facts to suit his argument and ignoring others which fail to support it, and generally, in presenting a disputable case as though it were one about which there can be no argument. We must refuse to be drawn along this pleasant path. If we state our case with more qualifications and less apparent assurance than Mr. Foster it is not because our views are not so strongly held. It is rather that gramophone technique is not the simple matter that Mr. Foster tries to make out. And, to say the least, our combined experience in this is longer, wider, and deeper than Mr. Foster's can have been.

We have *not* praised the small sound-box for what it *is* as an average commercial product, but for what it *can be* when due thought and skill are brought to bear on its design and construction. It is no criticism of our views to labour the fact that good small boxes are few and far between; we admit it. Our original plea, which called forth Mr. Foster's dissertations, was that makers should set to work to make the small box what it *can be* rather than what it usually *is*. If it be true that the average small box gives an unnatural tone, we assert that in general the large box gives a tone that is no more natural, but merely *different*, and that while the small one's disease is curable the larger one's is not.

Let us first of all correct a few inaccuracies and misconceptions contained in Mr. Foster's second letter: (1) Mica is no more a metal than a piece of clay is; it is a mineral. Presumably Mr. Foster means that mica, in thin sheets, is springy or elastic, like thin sheets of some metals; but so is a stretched sheet of rubber. (2) Being still in possession of some of our senses, we have never professed to regard the fragility of mica and the brittleness of glass as advantages. We merely suggest that a material which for any specific purpose is superior to other materials should not be lightly brushed aside because it happens to be fragile, but treated with care. (3) The graphic account of how Mr. Edison proceeded from one reproducer to another, steadily increasing the size of the diaphragm, might lead one to suppose that when he eventually produced the Edison-B reproducer (for Blue Amberol cylinders) its dimensions approximated to those of a small cart-wheel; but actually this Colossus is quite small, its diaphragm being only 41 mm. in diameter—i.e., smaller than the diaphragm in an Exhibition sound-box. All this, however, is quite irrelevant. It is generally understood that, unless the contrary is expressly stated, gramophonic discussion in these columns refers to lateral-cut disc records and apparatus for playing them; the Edison system is quite different and our preceding remarks had no reference to it. (4) Mr. Seymour did *not* introduce his Superphone box to replace or supersede his small boxes; he introduced it primarily for use on small table models and cabinets. Nobody, however, has advocated the large open-horn machine more enthusiastically than Mr. Seymour, who recommends his *small* boxes, which he has *not* given up, for use on this type of gramophone. Incidentally, Mr. Seymour tells us he is working on a new box for electrical recordings, and, meanwhile, is issuing a modified Superphone for the same purpose.

The career of a gramophone company is not necessarily a series of increasing triumphs from the musical standpoint, even though it may be so from the £. s. d. point of view. The gradual suppression of the large open horn machine in favour of small table models with internal horns was, musically, a very retrograde step, though to many it doubtless proved a commercial success. Mr. Foster bids us ponder on the fact that the Gramophone Company and Mr. Edison, after having explored and developed (?) small boxes for over twenty years, have given them up, but omits to mention that the last Columbia box (No. 7, 48 mm.) is decidedly smaller than its predecessor (No. 6, 55 mm.). Further, he ignores the now obvious fact that the Gramophone Company designed their latest box with a view to its playing the *new* recordings; we are discussing the *old* ones, with which our correspondent must obviously have worked during the greater part of his sixteen years of study.

The "soon-to-be-obsolete" mica has been an uncommonly long time dying; meanwhile, scores of other diaphragms have arisen to challenge it and, having helped to swell the files and coffers of the Patent Office, have met their Waterloo, and now lie buried in oblivion.

It is a common failing of gramophiles, whenever reproduction is at fault, to "blame the sound-box." Mr. Foster develops this failing still further; "if there is anything wrong, blame the diaphragm" is his simple motto. He is under a delusion when he talks of having tuned thousands of small boxes and found it an easy task. He evidently does not know the ABC of tuning; changing a diaphragm, replacing perished gaskets and fiddling with the springs is only toying with the problem, though it is as far as many experimenters go.

Let us glance for a moment at the numerous variations possible in points of detail when constructing a sound-box of the Exhibition type. The back-plate may be made from numerous substances; it may vary in weight, thickness, and shape; in particular the distance its front face enters the front shell of the sound-box may vary, thus varying the distance between back plate and diaphragm; further, the size of the central hole may be varied. The gaskets may be varied in thickness and elasticity. The upper arm of the stylus-bar may be made from all sorts of metals—e.g., brass, bronze, phosphor-bronze, soft iron, mild steel and hard steel; it can be varied in shape, dimensions, and weight, and its physical properties need not be uniform throughout—e.g., a soft iron upper arm may be hardened at the tip, where it turns over to meet the diaphragm. The needle socket, also, may be made from a variety of metals and varied in shape and weight; even the weight of the needle-screw can be varied. The springs, apart from being tightened up or slackened, may be re-tempered; if necessary they may be replaced by another pair, either weaker or stiffer (and they may even be scrapped in favour of one of many other alternative spring mountings). The diaphragm may vary in weight and thickness, and, within small limits, in diameter. Is it likely, then, that the tuning of these boxes can be a simple matter, when it may involve new gaskets, new or newly-tempered springs, alterations to, or the partial or complete reconstruction of the stylus-bar and possible operations on the back-plate in a lathe? Is it so very surprising that commercial boxes of this type vary in quality? And is it not absurd to assume quite glibly that these variations are due entirely or almost entirely to the diaphragms? Is it likely that anyone not thoroughly *au fait* with all these structural variations and incapable of taking full advantage of them, has ever heard *any* diaphragm at its best in such a box, except by sheer accident or

by being able to profit from the skill of another ? And of what value, then, is his opinion as to the relative merits of different diaphragms in it ?

We have admitted that when a small box with a mica diaphragm is giving shrill results it is often possible to improve the tone by changing the mica for an alternative diaphragm ; but when we deny that this proves the inferiority of mica we are accused of quibbling and playing with words . It is " proof sufficient " that the alternative diaphragm " was sufficient for that particular box, which is all that matters," says Mr. Foster. Not at all. It merely shows that one who cannot get the best out of any diaphragm can often get better results with other diaphragms than with mica. It is not unnatural, after one has spent a great deal of time in experimenting, to assume that one has determined the best that mica can do ; but in the great majority of cases such an assumption is erroneous. Why ? Because experimenters fail to realise the great number of variable factors upon which the tone of a sound-box depends. They will scrap without compunction such a vital component as the diaphragm, but lay no sacrilegious hand upon the stylus bar, failing to realise its enormous importance. Besides, it is so very much easier to put in alternative diaphragms than to make or alter stylus bars, much easier and quicker and safer ; and a metal or fibrous diaphragm hasn't that annoying habit of splitting round the central hole—it " gives " so nicely when the head of the diaphragm screw isn't exactly parallel with it. Thus the experimenter rings the changes on those factors that are easily spotted and readily varied and is, consciously or unconsciously, blind to those which are equally vital but not so obvious or so easy to vary. Eventually, he thinks he has found the best diaphragm ; actually he has never given *one* a thorough opportunity of displaying its merits.

The large non-mica box, we are told, easily gives a deep rich tone ; in general, we query the " rich " and see no reason to limit the remark to non-mica boxes, but otherwise we agree. The large box gives a deep tone very easily, too easily, in fact, and with delightful impartiality in all reproductions, from basso profundo to coloratura soprano, from tuba to violin. Hence our objection to it.

" MacMica's " letter calls for little comment from us. With many of his remarks we entirely agree. In particular we endorse his advice to gramophiles in general to choose a sound-box with a diaphragm not exceeding 2¼ inches in diameter ; but so far as the smallest sound-boxes are concerned, we disagree with his remark that a steel stylus bar is needed for use with fibre needles.

Yours, etc.,
THE EXPERT COMMITTEE.

SUGGESTIONS.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am not eligible for your competition, as I have addressed you before on several subjects ; but while your attention is being drawn by others to the policy in general and in detail of our paper may I indicate briefly one or two points which may enter into your calculations ?

Firstly, increase the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE. As you have gradually eliminated your personal note since the first number —a deplorable but perhaps necessary development—now begin to eliminate the happy-family parochial atmosphere. Get nothing but competent writers on your staff, and be able to pay them well. Lists of records, articles on classes of records or on celebrities, should be exhaustive and authoritative *always*—such as those of Mr. Terry on Mozart or Mr. Latham on Wagner. Doubtless from financial reasons you have in the past admitted a good deal of second-rate and even shoddy articles and letters. Get rid of this. Increase the circulation, increase the advertisements (so that they are really representative, as the motor papers are of the motor trade), increase your power. If necessary get capital by offering your readers debentures. THE GRAMOPHONE ought to be known all over the world and recognised as the leading musical paper that it is.

Secondly, cut out Gramophone Society Reports ruthlessly. Cut out the Forum. Have competitions regularly, not just when it occurs to you. Make a regular feature of lists of good records. Aim at compressed information (blue pencil even Mr. Klein, if necessary !) and give plenty of diagrams in the technical articles. Cut out art supplements. They are costly and only appreciated by the few.

Thirdly, give up the idea of avoiding wireless. Wireless and the gramophone *must* co-operate ; they are for the millions ; concerts and the printed sheet are for the hundreds only. Make all your staff, your reviewers and your contributors, have a wireless set and an Amplion attachment to their gramophones, and make them all write for wireless readers as well as for gramophone readers. This is bound to come quite soon—so anticipate it, Mr. Editor, and put your pride and personal bias aside.

Fourthly—this you may accept cheerfully after my previous strictures—*please* improve the vocabulary of the gramophone. You alone can do it. We want another simpler word to cover all sorts of gramophones. " Record " is ambiguous. Drop it altogether and stick to " disc." " Needle-track alignment " and " weight adjuster " are cumbersome phrases. Let us have a series of short racy words coined by you and used invariably by everyone in THE GRAMOPHONE till they are forced into general use.

That is all, Sir. I apologise for saying so much, but you will know that my only desire is to see a steady advance in the paper which I have always venerated as the most brilliant journalistic undertaking since the war.

Yours faithfully,
London, S.W. 2. WORMLEY HILL.

THE AMATEUR.

(*To the Editor of* THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have recently completed a conical strawboard horn for gramophone *á la* Balmain. This is 8 ft. long by 30 in. diameter at mouth, and is 5-ply thick, making it about $\frac{3}{16}$ in. thick finished. This horn is carried at its centre of gravity on trunnions in a five-leaved steel spring bow, and this bow has a centre pivot revolving in a ball bearing. The sound-box, an H.M.V. No. 2, is fixed in the small end of the horn, so that the horn, being balanced, all the weight on record is that of the sound-box.

I have improvised with this horn a rubber neck made from a crutch end, costing 10d. in a rubber shop. The crutch end has a hole bored in the solid end, $\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter. This enables it to be slipped on the goose neck, and the tubular part of the crutch end takes the boss on back of sound-box. This method of fitting sound-box to rubber neck enables the needle to be set at any required angle, and the sound-box thus fitted has the added advantage that it can be twisted round horizontally to correct the needle alignment.

With this particular horn the needle alignment can be made almost absolutely perfect, as the distance from point of needle to centre of pivot on which horn swings is almost 5 ft. The necessary degree of elasticity in rubber neck can be got by leaving the tubular part of crutch end long if great elasticity is required for the particular machine to which it is to be fitted, or cutting it short if less elasticity is required.

With this combination of 8 ft. horn and rubber neck the reproduction, especially of band records, is superb, the bass brasses getting something like their true value, and effects are heard which are not noticeable with another machine I have, an H.M.V. cabinet model of the largest size.

The sound-box and records may suffer from the effort necessary to produce such a large volume of sound, but the effect is worth it, and I will gladly renew the records when worn out, and the sound-box should it collapse.

I will be pleased to demonstrate to any real expert gramophone correspondent you may have in Glasgow or neighbourhood, by appointment, and on your introduction.

Yours truly,
Uddingston. WILLIAM HAMILTON.



E.M.G. Models

A new leaflet issued by Mr. E. M. Ginn, 267, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1, is worth reading by all those—especially overseas readers—who care for the something special which is offered with the E.M.G. models and who respect a manufacturer who admits his indebtedness to THE GRAMOPHONE. After reading it ourselves we feel almost shy of urging the claims of the E.M.G. hand-made gramophones.

Summer Slackness

Trade has been very slack, so they say. No one is surprised. But if we may judge by the nearest neighbours to the London Office, Imhof's and the Gramophone Exchange in New Oxford Street, Chappell's Cliftophone Saloon, and Keith Prowse's in Bond Street (not to mention Collier's little shop by St. Martin's Theatre), business " over the counter " is as brisk as ever.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[*Each comment or question should be written clearly on a* **separate** *slip of paper and addressed to* THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, *Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.*]

(424) **Circulation.**—I have just found out that there is another reader of your monthly living about fourteen miles from here. Two readers out of a white population of twelve in an area of roughly a thousand square miles of bush and plain is not bad, is it?—W. C., Abetifi, Gold Coast.

(425) **H.M.V. Horn as Loud Speaker.**—I have found the amplifier in my new H.M.V. model 511 a more satisfactory loud speaker for wireless than any of the ordinary loud speakers on the market that I have heard. This hint may be of value to other readers who have wireless.—C. R. S., Horsham.

(426) **Colin Taylor.**—Have any of the songs of Colin Taylor, the director of music at Capetown University, yet been recorded? —A. M. G., Bloemfontein.

[It is hard to trace composers in the catalogues. Gervase Elwes sang "A Pastoral" (Col. L.1234) and "Gifts" (Col. D.1428), but probably other readers can assist you further.—ED.]

(427) **Also sprach Zarathustra.**—Can any of your readers give me the "breaks" of the Polydor records of Richard Strauss's "Also sprach Zarathustra" (Philharmonia score)? I have puzzled with them, but failed to get them to my satisfaction. The score gives 33-4 minutes as the time of production; the records take 27 minutes to play (three double-sided). Presumably there are "cuts."—F. M., San Diego.

(428) **What was it?**—Some time ago I was able to hear at an impromptu concert a song by an elderly man whom one could "place" as a one time operatic singer. His voice, constitution, and memory were all badly affected by internment in Germany during the war. All he could recollect was that the song was called "The Last Watch." Can you or any reader tell me the "Foreign" name of the song or its author or the opera to which it belongs and, more important than all, if it is obtainable on a record, and, if so, its make, number, and price?—S. W., Aldershot.

(429) **The Moonlight Sonata.**—Which is the complete version of the "Moonlight Sonata"? H.M.V. have given us one by Lamond and one by Mark Hambourg. Velvet Face have given us one by Marie Novello and Polydor one by Wilhelm Kempff.—S. E. W., Cannock.

[Lamond and Kempff are complete. Hambourg (and Friedheim on Columbia) are not. I have not heard Marie Novello's version. —ED.]

(430) **The Pathetic Sonata.**—Which is the best and complete version of Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique"? The Columbia version by Murdoch is very cut; the other by Polydor is on two records.—S. E. W., Cannock.

[See review of the latter, March number, page 485.—ED.]

(431) **Record Wear.**—The following experience will no doubt interest those who own one of the new H.M.V. instruments and dislike the indistinct reproduction and uncertainty of fibre needles.

I had tested the Euphonic grip and needles with several sound-boxes and had discarded it, not liking the quality of tone it produced, but happening to try it on the new H.M.V. I found it gave quite a good result. Since then I have used it regularly; the records show no signs of wear, and it is delightful to be free from that apprehensive feeling one generally has when playing cherished records with ordinary steel needles. With needles such as the Euphonic, which play more than one record, an indicator showing the number played would be useful. I suggested to the makers a movable pointer on a numbered dial which could be screwed to the motor board, but they do not think it worth while. Perhaps some other firm will show more enterprise?—E. D. M., Derby.

(432) **The Maiden's Wish.**—Can Chopin's "Maiden's Wish," mentioned on page 37 of "Opera at Home," be obtained on any record. I heard Moiseivitch play it at Queen's Hall as a pianoforte solo and thought it was beautiful.—F. E. C., London, N. 21.

[Victor 6231, Paderewski, 12 in., and Brunswick 15042, Godowsky, 10 in.—ED.]

(433) **Flora Woodman and others** (see Vol. III., page 571, and Vol. IV., page 64, 416).—We have no recordings worth mentioning of our three greatest sopranos, namely, Flora Woodman, Carrie Tubb—who is a very great artist indeed with a fine dramatic voice—and Dorothy Silk. These singers produce their voices in a perfect and effortless manner, sing always in tune, and are entirely free from that terrible vice of many present-day singers—vibrato.—L. S., Croydon.

(434) **Best Records Wanted.**—(*a*) the Miserere Scene, (*b*) "Salve, dimora, casta e pura," and (*c*) of the late Francesco Tamagno.—L. A., Beckenham.

(435) **Best Versions Wanted.**—(*a*) "Mon Cœur s'ouvre à ta voix," (*b*) "Rosenkavalier" Waltz, (*c*) "Lilac Time" Selection, (*d*) Brahms' "Hungarian Dances," (*e*) Meditation from "Thaïs," (*f*) "Habañera" from "Carmen." With good reverses, if possible. —S. D., Highbury.

(436) **Best Versions Wanted.**—Which is the best version of: (*a*) "Si, mi chiamano Mimi" ("Bohème"), preferably in English? (*b*) Michael Bohnen's "Wotan's Abschied" ("Die Walküre"), Polydor or Odeon? (*c*) Is Bohnen's "Prologue" ("Pagliacci") Odeon, in any way superior to Ruffo's interpretation, H.M.V.? (*d*) Is "Dunque io son" ("Barbiere di Siviglia") a comparatively poor record, that it has been relegated to the No. 2 (H.M.V.) catalogue? If so, is there any probability of an entirely new record of this lovely duet being published in the near future?—P. F. L., Glasgow.

(437) **Suggestions for Recording.**—To swell the list of those contributors of yours who are always clamouring for the further recording of good music, may I add my little list, for which I daily hope and pray: The Rachmaninoff "Piano Concerto," the "Immortal Hour" (complete in album), Elgar's "First Symphony," Holst's "The Perfect Fool Ballet Music," César Franck's "D minor Symphony" (that awful recording by Columbia was one of the sorrows of my life), Holst's "Hymn of Jesus," Ravel's "Valse Choreographic."—R. B. McL., Câmpina, Roumania.

(438) **Suggestions for Recording.**—(*a*) Tannhäuser, "Venus's Song" and "Tannhäuser's Song to Venus," from Act I. (*b*) Lohengrin, Songs or duets by Ortrud and Telramund, which I heard sung by an Italian Opera Co. in Birmingham thirty years ago and have not forgotten. (*c*) Tristan, "Death Scene"; very long, but is wanted to complete my records of Tristan. (*d*) "Assumpta est Maria," Fiehrer; soprani soli, quartet and chorus, one of the finest pieces of sacred music ever written. I remember a boy from Brompton Oratory singing it at Birmingham during the St. Philip Neri celebrations. (*e*) Brunckner's "Te Deum." The quartets in this are lovely; a pity it is no longer performed.—V. G. R., Birmingham.

(439) **The L.S.Q.**—In the Columbia July supplement a whole page is devoted to Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" Quartet, played by the London String Quartet, mentioning all the four players' names; above this announcement appears a photograph . . . . of the Lener Quartet.—W. E. R., Liverpool.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[*Answers must be written on* **separate** *slips and should be forwarded to* THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, *Frith Street, London, W. 1, as early in the month as possible.*]

(422) **Debussy's Music.**—One of your readers asks for recordings of Debussy's "Pellèas." A magnificent set of eight records are done by the French H.M.V. . . ., by Vanni Marcoux, Charles Panzéra (ideal as Pelléas), Yvonne Brothier, and Tubiana, accompanied by the Orchestre des Concerts Touche. Most of the best bits are done, including six of the exquisite little orchestral interludes. I have obtained these through Messrs. Alfred Imhof.—T. M., Halifax.

(423) **Records Wanted.**—"Air du Bartholo" ("Barber of Seville") and "Si les filles d'Arles sont reines" (Mireille), sung by Allard, Actuelle, F.502, both sides good. Also "All'idea" ("Barber of Seville"), sung by McCormack and Sammarco, H.M.V., D.B.608. I can't stand the obverse from "La Gioconda"—J. C. W. C., London, S.W. 17.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

Note to Secretaries.—The publication in future of your reports in THE GRAMOPHONE is in jeopardy owing to the objections raised by other readers to the space hitherto devoted to them each month. The complaints are chiefly of prolixity, of unnecessary mention of names of members and dealers, of long lists of ever-recurrent records. Clearly what our readers as a whole would prefer is: (1) the name and address of the secretary each month; (2) a brief statement of what has happened at meetings; (3) a fuller statement only of important lectures or demonstrations of new machines. Recording secretaries are therefore begged to consider the general reader when writing reports, and not to yield to the temptation to pay compliments to local celebrities.

AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the July meeting the programmes by Mr. C. P. Ellwood and the writer contained Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* (Paderewski), *A la luz de la luna* (Caruso and De Gogorza), *Naila Waltz* (Backhaus), and Tchaikovsky's *Andante Cantabile, Op.* 11 (Elman String Quartet), all H.M.V. records. The Columbia Associated Glee Club's record of *John Peel* evoked a spontaneous call for "the other side, please," the soft passages in the second and third verses being specially commented upon. Of the new records, the electrical *Finlandia* proved rather disappointing, as did Columbia's *Nell Gwynne Dances*, but the J. H. Squire Celeste Octet's record of Jarnefeldt's *Præludium* was much praised. Of the Vocalion records sent us, it was interesting to have the old process recording of Chopin's *Scherzo, Op.* 31, and rather surprising to see how little it suffered, except in the matter of volume, by comparison with the recent electrical one. Ernest Butcher's first record of *Parson and Me*, Samuel Kutcher's rendering of Kreisler's *Liebeslied*, and Saint-Saëns' *Phaeton*, by the Aeolian Orchestra, were also excellent recordings.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, *Hon. Secretary.*

THE BIRMINGHAM GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Tuesday, June 29th, at Ebenezer Chapel board room, Steelhouse Lane. The programme was entirely devoted to records sent by the Parlophone, Vocalion, and Pathé companies. Among Parlophone issues there is no doubt that the best liked record was Marek Weber's Orchestra in *Pester Valse* by the Viennese Strauss—the music being played exactly in the spirit it should be. A set of two ten-inch Parlophone records of Kenneth Ellis and chorus in several of the sea shanties now so highly popular, were much appreciated, whilst the Wagner issues (although not quite up to the wonderful Parlophone Wagner standard) were listened to intently. This is not meant as adverse criticism as it is merely comparing them with the same company's previous Wagner issues. Among the Wagner issues, Elsa Alsen was good in Isolde's *Death Song*, and the two records devoted to the *Herd Boy's Song* and *Pilgrims' Chorus* from *Tannhäuser* were splendid; but best of all was Werner Engel's *Star of Eve*. The two *Freischütz* records were enjoyed, and the record of Sir Herbert Samuel's speech was heard with interest.

Vocalion issues were very interesting this month, outstanding among which was the first record of Selma D'Arco, the new soprano, in *A spirit flower* and an operatic aria—a delightful newcomer, whom we welcome with open arms as being that rare thing—a real artiste. Immensely enjoyed was the Life Guards' record of Sullivan's *Di Ballo Overture*—everyone should get this record. Malcolm MacEachern's record was greatly enjoyed by reason of the unusually fine opulent tone displayed, but he should sing better stuff. John Buckley and chorus devoted two ten-inch records to a selection of sea shanties—what a captivating set of records!—and the soloist uses a golden voice throughout, but best of all in *Tom's gone to Hilo*. There were also good records in Jelly d'Aranyi's *Hungarian Dance* and Van Lier's two 'cello solos, and the Aeolian Orchestra in *Euryanthe Overture*, well played. This, together with the Parlophone *Freischütz* records drew attention to this, the year of Weber's centenary.

Part two consisted of a special dance programme submitted by Pathé on Actuelle needle-cut records; all were finely played with good resonant tone, Wag Abbey's band being best liked. These are fine dance records, satisfying in every way. Among a fine selection the best liked were *Picador, Yvonne, Villa Rosa, Ukulele Avenue, Susie*, and *That certain party*. Three more serious Actuelle records were also included in the programme, the finest being Tito Schipa's record of two arias from *Tosca*—a glorious record, and the record with Rispah Goodacre's *Homing* on one side and Kate Winter's *One morning very early* on the reverse, whilst a good record was the record of two of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*.—CHARLES SUMMERFIELD, *Secretary.*

BLACKBURN AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Under the chairmanship of Dr. Roe a most enjoyable evening was spent on July 13th, when Mr. Egan gave a recital of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The songs *Over the bright blue sea* and *We sail the ocean blue* made a special appeal on Tuesday evening. Mr. Egan is a great technician in his method of presentation of gramophone music. He deserved and received a most cordial reception. Prior to the recital of *H.M.S. Pinafore* Mr. Egan demonstrated a number of excellent records kindly lent by the Pathé people for the occasion.—G. C. F. ROE.

BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

(*Hon. Sec.:* J. T. FISHER, 28a, Fieldhouse Road, S.W. 4.)

Meeting on June 1st: the "Old Masters," given by Mr. C. Sterry. July 6th: Mr. Fisher on "the use of folk-songs by modern British composers," followed by a programme of "mainly instrumental music," by Mr. Veal.

DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

(*Hon. Sec.:* L. J. ARCHER, 7, Merrion View Avenue, Merrion.)

June meeting: complete recording of *Madame Butterfly* (H.M.V.). Annual general meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct. 14th.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Recording Secretary.*

EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.

July meeting, members' night; after a few new issues from H.M.V. and Columbia lists, members' records were played. For the August meeting (first Thursday), a selection of records by two members, new issues, and a distribution of Vocalion records.—REG. PAINE, *Recording Secretary.*

LEEDS GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

(*Hon. Sec.:* HY. SMITH, 43, Grosmont Place, Bramley, Leeds.)

June meeting, Vocalion and Parlophone records. *Der Freischütz Overture* (Parlo.), Sea Shanties (Voc. and Parlo.), Malcolm McEachern (Voc.), and two vocal records of *Tannhäuser* and one of Emmy Bettendorf (Parlo.) were specially pleasing. Two new sound-boxes belonging to members were tried and profitable discussion followed.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the annual members' night, held on Monday, July 12th, a high-class programme was contributed by the general members of the society, two prizes of 8s. 6d. each being offered for competition. The prize for the vocal section went to the remarkable and enthralling record of the Don Cossack Choir (Columbia), *Monotonously rings the little bell*, contributed by a lady member, Mrs. Puxty. With only two votes less came the superb trio, *Troncar suoi quell' empio* (*William Tell*), by Martinelli, De Luca, and Mardones, while a little further down the list came Elsa Stralia's *Sing, joyous bird* and Gigli's *Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali* (*Lucia*). The winner of the instrumental section was Mr. Kershaw, a new member, with Part II. of the *Fire Music* (*Valkyrie*), by the Symphony Orchestra. Only four votes behind came Part I. of the same record, which came out just a shade less brilliantly. Not far behind in popularity came Irene Scharrer's rendering of Chopin's *Fantaisie Impromptu*, followed by Bizet's delightful *Adagietto for strings* (*L'Arlésienne Suite*), by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, which was, however, handicapped by comparison with the new recordings mentioned. The attendance was remarkably good, in spite of the gorgeous weather, and there was a bigger "run" than ever on the new library. At the special request of many members a Columbia Grafonola instrument was used, most kindly lent by Mr. Hutchinson of the "Talkeries," 213, Deansgate, to whom the committee desire to express their appreciation. There will be no meeting of the society in August, the next being due on September 13th.—C. J. BRENNAND, *Hon. Secretary*, Mirfield, Wood Road, Whalley Range, Manchester.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Our meeting of Saturday, July 10th, unearthed some extraordinary "finds" among the records. Through the kindness of the Parlophone Company Mr. A. C. Edwards demonstrated, upon the society's gramophone, the following: *Queen of Sheba March*, Opera House Orchestra; *Andante with Variations* (Beethoven), instrumental, Hekking Trio; *Dite alla giovine* (*La Traviata*), duet, Franceschi and Fumagalli; *Hallelujah* (Hummel), Irmler Madrigal Choir; *Cavatina* (Raff), violin, Spiwakowski; *Siciliana, O Lola* (Mascagni), tenor, Lenghi-Cellini; and *O why so long delay* (Mozart), soprano, Fritzi Jokl. The Parlophone Company maintains its reputation for classical music at popular figures—and the surface improves. From the

Vocalion Company also came some notable numbers. Two extraordinarily funny songs—*The lazy shepherd* and *Parson and me*, baritone, Ernest Butcher—evoked much laughter. *Scherzo in B flat minor* (Chopin) was a brilliant piano record by York Bowen. Among other good records may be mentioned Miss Ethel Hook's rendering of the once popular ballad, *Love's old sweet song*. The latter part of the programme was given by Mr. C. Finch, who presented some excellent items, including *Naila Waltz*, piano, Backhaus; *All hail thou dwelling* (Gounod), said to be Tudor Davies' best record, and quite creditable. The beautiful *Prayer* and *Cradle Song*, organ, Herbert Dawson, and also Spencer Shaw's performance of *Storm* were perfect examples of the new grand organ recording. In *Storm* the illusion of a drenching downpour of rain is vividly produced unintentionally as an accompaniment to the music by the slight scratch of the needle on the record. Here the fault becomes a veritable virtue. *London and Daventry calling* was the great joke of the evening. Roars of laughter greeted this funny skit on wireless by the Savoy Orpheans. Altogether a most happy evening.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary.*

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the meeting held on June 21st both parts of the programme were provided by members. Mr. Cheney gave us some old and some new process records, of which perhaps the most appreciated were: Sanderson's *One morning*, sung by Mavis Bennett (H.M.V.); G. Marie's *La Cinquantaine* (*The Golden Wedding*), played by the Squire Octet (Col.); Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, played by Renée Chemet (H.M.V.); and the *Fragment* from Chopin's *Ballade, Op.* 23, played by Cortot (H.M.V.). This last, one of the early electrical recordings, still sounded as impressive, but also as metallic, as when originally heard. During the interval further generous gifts of records to the lending library from the Parlophone and Vocalion companies were announced, and one of these, a very fine record of Isolda's *Liebestod*, sung by Elsa Alsen (Parlo.) was played.

The second part was by Mr. Ross, who kept strictly to non-electrical recordings. Though some of these were by no means recent they all held their own well. The *Londonderry Air*, as arranged for solo violin and orchestra by Sir H. Harty (Col.), was particularly pleasing. Other very attractive records were: the last movement of Schumann's *Quintet, Op.* 44, by the Lener String Quartet and E. Hobday (Voc.); Giordani's *Caro mio ben*, sung by Phyllis Lett (H.M.V.); and Schumann's *Slumber Song*, arranged for viola and played by L. Tertis (Voc.). Rosing's rendering of Moussorgsky's *Song of the Flea* was highly dramatic.

The next meeting will be on Sept. 6th and will be devoted to new issues.—T. S. ALLEN, *Hon. Press. Secretary.*

(The rest are held over till next month)

National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1)

An American Branch

Prominence is given in the correspondence columns this month to a letter from Mr. William Braid White, of Chicago, adumbrating an American branch of the N.G.S. Mr. White, who is technical editor of the *Music Trade Review* (New York), and one of the associate editors of the *Talking Machine World*, is well qualified to take a lead in a scheme of this sort, and since he has shown a very keen appreciation of the work of THE GRAMOPHONE and of the N.G.S. for many months, we wish him every success in his endeavour to marshal American opinion to support us.

Tropical Diseases

A member in Calcutta returned fragments of a record broken in transit to show the pitting of the surface through heat. The shellac in it had almost reached melting point, and separation had begun to show on the surface of the record. Moreover, the record was badly warped on one side, which could only be caused by excessive heat. We are taking steps to pack records for warmer countries with special care in order to avoid this tiresome disappointment at the other end of the long journey.

Miniature Score

When will a miniature score publisher think it worth while to publish the works recorded by the N.G.S.? The Elgar *Piano Quintet* especially would command a wider sale than the limits of the Society.

The Bradford Festival

The prospectus of the Bradford Festival of Chamber Music, which is to be held on October 5th and 6th makes good reading for a member of the N.G.S. Out of the eighteen works chosen for performance at this first festival of its kind in England, he (or she) possesses no less than five, the Beethoven *F major Quartet*, the Schönberg *Sextet*, the Mozart *Oboe Quartet*, the Elgar *Quintet*, the Debussy *G minor Quartet*, and the Brahms *Clarinet Quintet*. Of the other thirteen works there are available only the César Franck *Quartet* (H.M.V.), two movements of the Dvorák *E flat Quartet* (Polydor), the Delius *Violin Sonata* (Columbia), one movement of the César Franck *Piano Quintet* (Columbia), and the Ravel *Septet* (Columbia). This seems to show that the advisory committee of the N.G.S. have advised well in the past and that members have voted wisely. The hon. secretary of the festival is Mr. Keith Douglas, of Farfield Hall, Addingham, Ilkley.

The Elgar Piano Quintet

Of this work, which can only be obtained for the gramophone on the records made by Ethel Hobday and the Spencer Dyke Quartet and issued to members of the National Gramophonic Society, Mr. A. J. Sheldon, writing in the July number of *Musical Opinion*, says: "Of the three chamber works" (of Elgar) "the *Quintet* is demonstrably the finest. It is also the finest contribution to the chamber music repertory yet made by an English composer, and one to be ranked with any music written for the piano and a quartet of strings by any composer."

Comments

"I am very pleased with this year's N.G.S. records, particularly those of the Elgar *Quintet*, which is a magnificent work recorded excellently."—D. A. G. MILLIGAN.

"I would like to offer my heartiest congratulations to the performers and the Recording Angel. I have never heard the 'cello and the inner strings so clearly and individually before."—D. R. DALTRY.

"I should like to say a special 'Thank you' for the Elgar *Quintet* records. To my mind they are in every way the best thing we have had yet."—F. B. SHAWE.

"The Elgar *Quintet* is supremely beautiful."—GEORGE A. BARNARD.

Brahms Quintet Comments

"The Brahms *Quintet* is excellent, and the old style recording shows up well in it; in fact, chamber music, apart from the piano, has gained little as yet from the new methods. But the N.G.S. must move with the times."—D. G. CLARKE.

"The Brahms *Quintet* is beautiful in every way, and I trust that no copies will be offered for sale in the advertisement column for some time to come! The performance and the recording are alike altogether satisfying."—HILDRED ROBINSON.

"I think that this set (the Brahms *Quintet*) is almost the very best that you have given us so far and (for me) it goes straight into the first-class in company with the Brahms *Sextet*, the Mozart *Oboe Quartet*, the Debussy, and *By the Tarn* quartets."—REVD. CHRISTOPHER LE FLEMING.

Chamber Music Supplement

There have been delays in printing the supplement to the list of recorded chamber music, but this should reach members before these lines appear, together with an analytical note on the Brahms *Clarinet Quintet*. A voting list for next year will shortly be circulated, but it has been harder than ever for the Advisory Committee to compile a programme to suit all tastes.

Sale of Single Records

There has been a considerable response to the offer last month (page 58) of single records which are left in stock from the first year's issues. Members can have any of them at 4s. each, non-members at 5s. each. All the available copies of A and B have been snapped up, and all of M. But we can still supply E, G, I, K, N, O, V, W, X, Y, Z, AA, BB, and DD. The particulars of these records were given last month.

We urge everyone who is interested to lose no time in securing any of these records which may be required for replacement or for gifts to attract friends into membership. When the holidays are over it may be too late.

AN EASTERN N.G.S.

AS announced in our April number (page 520), the National Gramophonic Society has been emulated in Japan, and the Secretary received some circulars in Japanese characters from the Secretary of the "Japan Good Records Recording and Distributing Society, Tokio." He has now received from the same source a translation of the circular, which is printed here *literatim*. Comment is unnecessary, except perhaps an assurance of our cordial good wishes for the success of the undertaking, and of hope that many other record-making societies may spring up in other parts of the world.

DECLAMATION.

Dainippon Meikyoku Records
Seisaku Hanpu Kwai, Tokio.

Recently, we have percieved much proceedings on musical knowledge and ineterest of our nations, which is party due to the visiting of the world wide famous musicians of Europe and America. However, to make more progress of ours than now, it is much necessary to depend upon the records played by the authorities, for we could not have any supreme player or supreme orchestra in our country.

The first rank of the foreign gramophone companies were reported to make their limitation ten thousand records as minimum when they were demanded to make new record. Therefore, there will be a member of record undiffused, for its unreasonable cost of the copy reight as compared with its narrow demand, or not well known in spite of its artistic value. In England, a certain part of a society was established and whose main object was to make up for these defects; some could not fined any profitable tendency as that of common merchants. Whilst to our sorry, the importing of such a record of above mentioned society is beyond our estimation, —namely about Y15.00 to Y16.00 and more it needs—which shows us impossible to fill up your demands.

From this point, we herewith, established a society, entitled Dainippon Meikyoku Records Seisaku Hanpu Kai, Tokio (Japan Good Records Recording and Distributing Society, Tokio) and we are very glad to inform you that Deutsche Grammophon Aktiengesellschaft, Berlin gave us their consents, with regard to the manufacturing of the record which we demanded there after, there is not any difficult to diffuce the record famous strains which we selected, shortky, you should have the record what you want.

To our great joy, if you wish to enter our society and we, herewith, hope your eariest determination.

Regulations.

1. Title.—Dainippon Meikyoku Records Seisaku Hanpu Kai.
2. Subject.—Diffused the record which is not manufactured as usual profittable merchandise.
3. Residence.—c/o. M. Anan & Co., No. 4 Awajicho, 2-chome, Kanda, Tokio, Japan.
4. Advisers and Managers.—
5. Exclusive factory.—Deutsche Grammophon A.G., Berlin-Hannover.
6. Entrance fee.—Members shall be payed Y2.00 as entrance fee.
7. Privilege for member.—Have our records @ Y5.00 each. (Public Y8.00 each.)
8. Caution money.—Member shall be prepayed Y1.00 per a record as caution money. (Above money cannot be returned, even when you should have discontracted, it shall be added to our funds.)
9. Selection of strains.—Two or three straits shall be selected through ont of the conference, consisting of the advisers and managers, and hereafter one of them adopted by the noting of the greater part of the members.
10. Diffusion of Record.—Record shall be diffused three times per annum. (Total amount will be about Y30.00.)
11. Badge of membership.—Badge of membership shall be given. (Show us this when ever you should accept the record, eccepting members in a great distance, who shall be send the reciept of the caution money instead of it.)
12. Note.—Entrance fee cannot be returned, excepting our dispersion.

LIST OF THE RECORDS.

No. 1.
Scriabine's IX & X Piano Sonata, op. 68 & op. 70.
Played by Alexander Sienkiewicz, polish pianist.
Record No. 1, 2 & 3.
(Have distributed on end of March, 1926.)

No. 2.
Bela Bartok's II String Quartet, op. 17.
Played by Amar String Quartet.
Record No. 4, 5 & 6.

Note (by K.K.)

We have now received the first records to be issued by this enterprising society. They are three in number and contain two of the late Scriabin sonatas (Nos. 9 and 10), played by Alexander Sienkiewicz on a Blüthner piano (as the disc is careful to inform us), and recorded by Polydor.

Here is a miniature League of Nations combination—Russian music played by a Pole and recorded in Germany for a Japanese society! The choice of music seems bold. These later Scriabin works are not altogether easy hearing, in some ways. In him a fresh wind blew through music. Our Japanese friends are taking a pretty big breath of this wind, and we hope they will enjoy the records. The playing is rather more percussive and pale than that which our new process has given us, in the latest records issued here. There is, however, a good deal of authority and imagination in it.

We congratulate our sister society on its spirit of adventure, and shall await with interest its further productions.

We believe there are as yet no English records of the bigger Scriabin works. Perhaps we might have one or two of the best of them, now that far better justice can be done to the tone of the piano and the art of the player—and, most important of all, to the composer.

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CHAMBER MUSIC

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1103-4 (12in., 13s.).—**Beatrice Harrison** and **Harold Craxton : Sonata for 'cello and piano** (Delius).

This sonata is a fairly recent work of Delius—it was written in 1916—and it contains the distilled essence of his very individual genius. It will attract those who love this composer's music as much as it will repel those to whom the long linked sweetness of his day dreams makes no appeal. I place myself in the former category and heartily recommend this beautiful work.

The sonata is spun from a single thread of melody and is in one movement only. This melody is subjected to the domination of various moods which may be roughly characterised as vigorous (side one) meditative (side two), passionate (side three), and triumphant (side four). The key is not stated on the label because, presumably, it is so indefinite ; but time directions might surely have been given. The recording gives us the best balance between the two instruments I have yet heard. Miss Harrison—to whom the sonata is dedicated—plays superbly, with rich glowing tone and with complete understanding of the music. Mr. Craxton is no less worthy of praise and the piano tone is excellent. Indeed one could not wish for a finer interpretation. Surface good. Score : Winthrop Rogers.

PARLOPHONE.

E.10464-10468 (five 12in. records, 22s. 6d., or in Art Album, 25s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand String Quartet : Quartet in D minor (Death and the Maiden)** (Schubert). For last side see under Violin Records. Miniature score, Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

It will be noticed that the Parlophone version of Schubert's *D minor Quartet* costs 3s. 6d. less than the Columbia version issued last month. The reduction is not more because Parlophone take up nine sides to Columbia's eight.

Miss Lorand is to be congratulated on the fine music she has lately been recording and by which, rather than by the airy trifles she so charmingly plays, she would wish, I imagine, to be judged as an artist. Now she leads a quartet which, inevitably, challenges comparison with the London String Quartet. The latter has the great advantage of the new recording, so it would hardly be fair to dwell much on this point. Naturally for clarity, balance, and definition of parts we look to the L.S.Q. version. It cannot be denied that Miss Lorand out-Leners Lener ; she is always too prominent, as in the first variation of the slow movement where she obscures the inner parts. Nevertheless the rhythmic vitality, the sensuous tone which Schubert's music particularly needs, are found better expressed in the L.Q. than the L.S.Q. A comparison of the two recordings shows this over and over again. The old string tone is still the most musical. A meticulous comparison would take many pages, and I must be content with the above remarks.

N. P.

ORCHESTRAL

Instruments used : H.M.V. new model, No. 126, sound-box No. 4, and large Columbia table grand, sound-box No. 7.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1101 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Chorus and Symphony Orchestra** conducted by A. Coates : **Swan Chorus** from **Lohengrin** and **March** from **Tannhäuser** (Wagner).

D.1102 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra** conducted by Sir E. Elgar : **Pomp and Circumstance Marches, Nos. 1 and 2** (Elgar).

D.1107 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Albert Coates : **Prelude, Tristan and Isolda** (Wagner). Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

The *Lohengrin* extract begins in the second scene (page 28 of Novello's vocal score) and runs into the third scene, to include Lohengrin's brief farewell to the swan. The chorus displays admirable vigour and outstrips the orchestra, tonally, but unfortunately is a bad second in the matter of pitch at one place—the end of the first choral bit in the third scene. It is a pity this could not be re-recorded, for the lapse is very bad. There is not very much delicacy in the remaining choral bars, marked *pp*. In the *Tannhäuser March* the men are better than the women. The whole thing is a little detached and shrill ; the shrillness is partly Wagner's fault, but I think the singing might have been more solid and stately, up aloft. Still, there is vim and brilliancy in the music, and plenty for the money. The voices, on the whole, strike one as of that type too—rather open, almost raw, in the tenor, and not very round in the bass. These do not give quite the satisfaction of the last two months' choral records, but it is a joy to hear such big and natural tone—natural, that is, in the sense of making one feel that one is hearing it very much as it would sound on the stage, only a little magnified and (perhaps) a trifle coarsened by proximity.

The new *Pomp and Circumstance No.* 1 gives us a fine dose of Elgarian swirl and swagger. That is only one side of this remarkable composite of a composer, and of course the less important side, though a significant one. This is one of the " fattest " and beefiest recordings I have heard ; one wants no better reproduction of the march. No. 2 has a rather different flavour—a tang that I personally like, as a change from the style of No. 1. These pieces, by the way, are comparatively simple but intensely interesting studies in scoring, an art of which Elgar is one of the first masters in our time—indeed, I think, in any. The recording does wonderful justice to his work.

The *Tristan Prelude* is another little triumph. Admitted that the incisive string tone is a little strong for this music of super-normal mood ; listen to the wonderful wind ! There is perhaps a shade of unevenness in their chord in bars 12 and 13, but such felicities follow that one is fairly carried away—far more so than by any previous recording. The last few bars are exquisite. The reading is strong, and just the least bit hurried, I feel. It may be that this was done to keep the music " in the air," but we want the sound to exhale rather than be extracted. This seems to me by far the most difficult piece the new recording has tackled so far. It can be subtilised still, and when it is we shall have something so near perfection that we can at last heave a sigh of sheer delight, and sit back and lose ourselves in the Wagnerian glories as we have done but rarely in the opera house.

ZONOPHONE.

2742 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Royal Cremona Orchestra : Elègie-Melodie** (Massenet) and **When it was June** (Jeblinger).

The playing is in restaurant style, coarsely coloured. The second air is a blowzy affair. I wonder if it afflicts others as it afflicted me ? I should name it as an example of unhealthy music—not anything that is remotely connected with morals, but simply a type of stagnant, flatulent, back-alley stuff.

PARLOPHONE.

E.10469 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin : Ballet Music, Samson and Delilah** (Saint-Saëns).

The lively Eastern music is better than the sentimental piece on the second side. In characteristic music the composer was almost always happy, though he made a small amount of matter go a long way, as a rule. The orchestra comes out well, as regards the upper half. The basses are a little grumpy, the wood-wind neat though occasionally somewhat lacking in colour, and the drums are much more successful than usual.

COLUMBIA.

L.1748 and 1749 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by G. Schneevoigt : **Suite, Sigurd Jorsalfar** (Grieg).

9101 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Percy Pitt : **Bridal Procession** and **Russian Dance** from **Coq d'Or** (Rimsky-Korsakov).

The suite contains three numbers.—*In the King's Hall* and *Borghild's Dream* on the first record, and the *Homage March* on the other. Sigurd the Crusader was King of Norway in the early years of the twelfth century. He joined the Crusaders in Palestine, and Björnson's play deals with his battles and adventures there. Grieg had only eight days in which to write the incidental music.



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but he made a good job of it. It suffers from that perpetual fault of his—rhythmic square-toedness. The full orchestra is strident, but the little wood-wind interlude in the first piece is charmingly reproduced. It is a bit of very typical and lovable Grieg. The *Dream* is slender, musically, and somewhat conventional. The 'cello at the start of the march-tune is neither very rhythmical nor in perfect tune. The former quality is not strong in the performance. The fine brass tone is the thing to enjoy. The increased "fatness" of this gives great pleasure.

The *Russian Dance* is a repetitive thing, after the Russian manner, of which we are getting more than a little tired. It is well reproduced, as is the Bridal Procession, though this might have had still more flamboyance in it. The climax is not quite so powerful as one could wish, though, comparing it with what we could get, until these recent months, it is wonderfully bigger. I think a trifle more dynamic play, a bit more flare and verve, would improve the reading.

POLYDOR.

69833, 69834, 69835 (12in., 17s. 3d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin,** conducted by Richard Strauss: **Symphony in E flat** (Mozart). Philharmonia and Eulenburg.

69840, 69841, 69842, 69843, 69844 (12in., 28s. 9d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin,** conducted by the composer: **Heldenleben (A Hero's Life)** (Strauss). Philharmonia and Eulenburg.

Breaks in the symphony: Side 1, end of exposition (page 12, Eulenburg); Side 2, end of first movement; side 3, page 31, end of line 1; side 4, end of slow movement; side 5, end of Minuet; side 6, end of work.

The new process is at work in the recording, and a rather too ancient one, I think, in the conducting. This seems to me a workmanlike performance, but not a very poetical one. Strauss is not subtle here. Parlophone's records of this symphony were extremely good, though in the older recording.

The strings have an edginess that helps to bring the lower tone out, but grates a little in the upper ranges. One of the best boons of the new system is that little wood-wind bits have taken on a new and vivid life. In those three bars at the top of page 16, for example, that lead in the recapitulation, the instruments' tone is charmingly fresh and limpid.

Some of the tone-levels are ill-considered—that at the start of the slow movement, for example. This is not *piano* playing. The players are a bit careless, rhythmically, in several places. The delicacy of this movement's step is not well caught. Fineness matters immensely in such a work. It is possible, for example, to get much more out of the last movement than Strauss does. The best one can say of this is that the march-discipline is good—better than one often finds it; but the finer dynamic shades are not attempted. There is enough musicianship in the playing to make the records acceptable, especially as the music is bodied forth so much more fully than ever before (this is the first "new process" recording of the symphony). But I wish Strauss had treated it more thoughtfully and "inwardly." It has not the dramatic life of the *G minor*, but there is a lot of sweetness and emotion in it, for the right man to awaken.

Breaks in *A Hero's Life:* Side 1, end of page 28 (Eulenburg). side 2, page 50, bar 3; side 3, page 59, two bars from end; side 4, beginning of page 80; side 5, page 117, bar 2; side 6, page 153, bar 1; side 7 goes back to page 149, bar 4, and ends at top line of page 168; side 8 goes to page 188, bar 2; side 9, to page 204, bar 4; side 10, to end of work.

Not very much need be said in analysis. There are six sections. The first, *The Hero*, is on side 1 of the first record. The main themes are all tiny, but strong. They typify various elements in the heroic character—imagination, ardour, will-power, pride, emotion, and so forth. This is an attractive figure that Strauss limns for us. I figure him no Napoleon, but more of a Lincoln, with a more flamboyant soul than the great liberator.

The next section shows *The Hero's Opponents*. They spit and snarl and growl. The wood-wind is very good here, getting the right thin, acidulated tone. The Hero is depressed, as they minimise his qualities (some of his themes are given in with notes of smaller value). At the end of the section he casts them off, or drives them from his mind (page 45, an inch from the inside of the record).

The third scene is *The Hero's Helpmate*, typified by the solo violin—a coquette, evidently, at the start. After a while a love duet is developed (page 60), with all the rich scoring for which Strauss is famous. Just before the end of the fourth side there is a beautiful entry of the Hero theme in the bass.

Side 5 begins with a reminder that the opponents are still active. They have at present no power to disturb the lovers' bliss, but very soon trumpets without transport us to *The Battlefield*. We hear the theme of the opponents (the one that jumps up and down derisively) transferred to the trumpets, in a new rhythm; the drums keep up a rhythm of their own, and the rising theme of the Hero is heard struggling magnificently. The love music plays its stimulating part, and the section ends in a burst of triumph (end of side 6 and beginning of 7), followed by a new melody (page 155) which may be considered that of a triumphant song of victory.

There follows, after a pause on a high violin note, the harp sweeping upwards, a brusque questioning theme in clarinets and violas (page 168—beginning of side 8), in which you figure the Hero surveying the battlefield, and asking the meaning of his victory, and whither it will lead. Immediately he gets to work, and we have the scene of *The Hero's Works of Peace*. Here are the famous quotations from many Strauss works. He was not the first to make use of this device. To go no further back, Wagner quoted himself, but in a more modest way. This section continues through sides 8 and 9, but all is not perfect happiness. There is anxiety and perhaps disappointment. Some of the small "Hero" motives are transformed into figures expressing these emotions. But apparently he seeks peace in the countryside, and we enter on the last phase, *The Hero's Flight from the World, and Fulfilment*. The last and noblest melody (page 203) shows him captain of his soul. One last episode from the past threatens but cannot shake his inward peace. Secure in that, his life-work fulfilled, he goes from us in solemn splendour. Is it all worth doing? Most of us, I think, will agree that parts of it are not worth while; but take away these, and you have a singularly strong and in places moving picture of a great man. The recording of such a work presents enormous difficulties. I like best the consistency of the work; there is no really weak spot, though experience of the work "at first ear" reminds one that still greater clarity might perhaps yet be achieved; and of course, the sonority is still nothing like that of the real thing. Otherwise the tone-colours are so faithfully laid before us that the work really lives.

K.K.

INSTRUMENTAL

VIOLIN.

VOCALION.

X.9818 (10in., 3s.).—**Albert Sandler: Le Cygne** (Saint-Saëns) and **Tambourin Chinois** (Kreisler).

COLUMBIA.

3985 (10in., 3s.).—**Bernard Reillie: Minuet** (Beethoven) and **Chant Hindou** (Rimsky-Korsakov).

PARLOPHONE.

E.10472 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Tossy Spiwakowsky: Scherzo-Tarantella, Op. 18** (Wieniawski) and **Minuet** (Porpora-Kreisler).

E.10468 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand: Largo Espressivo** (Pugnani). See under Chamber Music.

BRUNSWICK.

3067 (10in., 3s.).—**Frederic Fradkin: L'Amour toujours l'amour** (Friml) and **June brought the roses** (Openshaw).

BELTONA.

6057 (10in., 3s.).—**Isaac Losowsky: Poem** (Fibich) and **Dragon Flies** (Zsolt).

1019 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Dennis Molloy: Humorous of Ennistymon** and **The boys of the Lough.**

Albert Sandler's playing must be known to thousands of listeners-in—he is the *chef de musique* at the Grand Hotel, Eastbourne—and no doubt they will be glad to have a permanent record of his playing. I like his quiet unhurried playing of *Le Cygne*, but it is a pity he spoils the contour of the tune with that last *prima donna* high note. He needs no applause-catching devices. His technique in the Kreisler is neat. Surface and tone (old system of recording) good. It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Sandler never plays quite in tune. This is, of course, more noticeable on the record than on the wireless. My pressing of Bernard Reille's record is defective, so I should prefer not to criticise it. There is beautiful playing on both sides of the Spiwakowsky record and well recorded violin tone. Though I have never heard him in the flesh this young violinist displays gifts which would lead me, I think, to prefer him to any of his contemporaries. His bowing is marvellously feathery



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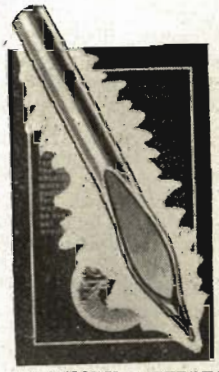
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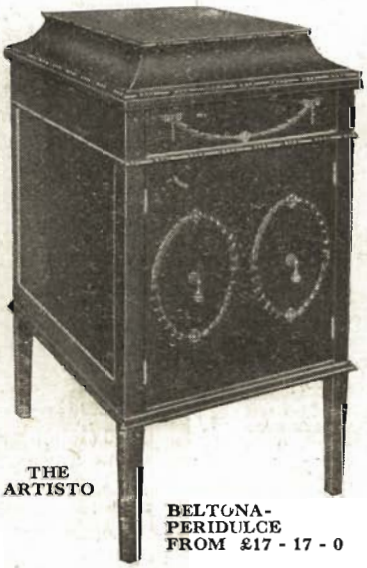
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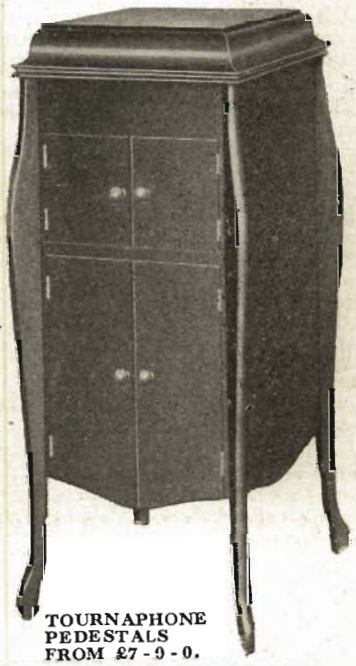
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in the rapid passage work of the *Tarantelle*. The resemblance to Kreisler's playing at all points has been noted. Recording good, though the piano is too far away. Miss Lorand plays a spacious *Largo* of Pugnani's with her usual fine tone and musicianship. An artist one can rely on. The piano comes out remarkably well on Fradkin's record and his playing too is full and pleasant. The music calls for no comment. There is a slight "roar" on the record surface.

Isaac Losowsky's intonation is rather uncertain and the recording makes his playing sound curiously anæmic. Dennis Molloy provides fare for those who want to jig or reel.

PIANO.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

E.427 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Benno Moiseivitch : Si oiseau j'étais** (Hensett) and **Playera** (Granados).

D.B.931 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—**de Pachmann : Polonaise, Op. 26, No. 1** and **Waltz in A flat, Op. 64, No. 3** (Chopin).

REGAL.

G.8623 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Lilian Bryant : Rustle of Spring** (Sinding) and **Nocturne in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2** (Chopin).

Moiseivitch plays his first little piece with delightful fluency and pure tone—it is well recorded. In Granados's *Playera*, one of the *Danza Española*, well known in Kreisler's violin transcription, he is not so successful owing to a hardness and deadness of tone in forte passages.

Pachmann's record is a disappointment. The waltz (very short measure, by the way) sounds muddy, a fault to be attributed to the recording, and the *Polonaise* (key not given on label) is, to me at any rate, dull ; a fault to be attributed to Chopin ! The recording is much better on this side. It is possible that repeated hearings might cause me to modify this opinion, which is only a first impression. Surfaces good.

Miss Bryant bangs her way through two over-familiar pieces with a virility that caused me to perspire in sympathy. The piano tone is very metallic and ever and anon notes jump out and hit you in the face !

VIOLA.

COLUMBIA.

L.1761 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Lionel Tertis : An old Irish air** (traditional, arr. Tertis) and **Hier au Soir** (Tertis).

The viola (like all the stringed instruments under the new recording) has here rather a reedy tone, but its characteristic—a sort of dark purple tone-colour—comes through well. What an aloof, mysterious instrument it is. Needless to say, Mr. Tertis' playing is simply exquisite, both in his arrangement of a lovely old Irish tune and in a delightfully romantic trifle of his own which entirely captivated me. The piano is a little over-weighted, but its tone is good, surface good also. A record to buy.

'CELLO.

COLUMBIA.

D.1540 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**W. H. Squire : Passione** (Panzato) and **Vivace** (Sammartini).

VOCALION.

X.9819 (10in., 3s.).—**Jacques van Lier : Arioso** (Mazzano) and **Arlequin Triste** (Florembassi).

Squire. Balance and tone excellent. Most of the 'cello notes are finely resonant, but now and then there is a slight deadness. I like the first piece best ; the second is a little spikey and one always feels the 'cello to be slightly elephantine in quick music. Surface good.

van Lier. One misses the sonority given to the 'cello by the new recording, but otherwise van Lier's playing of these two gentle pieces is very pleasant and musicianly.

MANDOLINE BAND.

COLUMBIA.

3984 (10in., 3s.).—**Circolo Mandolinistica Guiseppe Verdi of Leghorn : Serenade** ("Scugnuzza") (Costa) and **Spanish Serenade** (A. Margutti).

Here is an ideal record for the river. The new recording is very kind to these attractive instruments, played as only Italians can play them, *con amore*. Tone very full and "thrummy." At the close one can almost hear the *vivas* and *admirabiles* of the audience.

N.P.

CHORAL

HANDEL FESTIVAL (CRYSTAL PALACE), 1926.

Messiah (Handel).—**Choir and Orchestra of 3,500,** conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood : **Behold the Lamb of God** and **And the Glory of the Lord.** Col. L.1768, 12in., 6s. 6d.

He trusted in God and **Let us break their bonds.** Col. L.1769, 12in., 6s. 6d.

Lift up your heads, two parts. Col. D.1550, 10in., 4s. 6d.

Royal Choral Society with Royal Albert Hall Orchestra under Dr. Malcolm Sargent : **Behold the Lamb of God** and **Hallelujah Chorus** from **Messiah** (Handel). Recorded at the Albert Hall, April 2nd. H.M.V., D.1108, 12in., 6s. 6d.

Irmler Ladies Choir.—Good Night, Good Night, Beloved (Pinsuti) and **Laudate Dominum** (Mozart). Parlo. E.10475, 12in., 4s. 6d.

The Handel Festival.—The recording of the choral wonders inherent to this great triennial gathering forms the realisation of a dream which the present writer began to indulge in directly the achievement began to loom up as a scientific possibility. Happily the Columbia Company has grasped the magnitude of the undertaking with such accuracy that it has proved a complete success at the first attempt. There is no need for comparisons, but it is only fair to say that it is quite on a par with the unimpeachable excellence of the reproductions of certain episodes (noticed in another column) of the recent opera season at Covent Garden. Only for me, with my recollection of half a century of Handel Festivals, I am bound to add that this embodies the more precious and wonderful achievement of the two. To have thus gathered in and stored up in such concentrated fashion, within the tiny superficial area of a gramophone disc, that gigantic combination of sounds which can be heard nowhere else on earth save once every three years in the Centre Transept of the Crystal Palace, seems to me little short of miraculous. The wonder of it does not cease, but only increases, when you remember that you can turn this flood of sound on and listen to it with undisturbed enjoyment, within the comfortable but restricted space of your own drawing-room.

What strikes me as the most marvellous and perhaps most touching feature about these three records of *Messiah* choruses is the instantly recognisable sensation of that unique *timbre*, that peculiar conglomerate of sounds, which we associate with the triennial product of the Handel Orchestra and with no other musical combination in the world. There it is. You hear and distinguish it all without an effort—the 3,000 voices, the 500 instrumentalists, compact in one trained body, held under perfect rhythmical sway by a single conductor, and, what is being imparted to it in the process—namely, the extraordinary influence of the vast surrounding space which nothing can imitate, much less equal, outside of the place itself. The total result, as demonstrated by a good machine, is almost as overwhelming and thrilling on the gramophone as it is at the Crystal Palace ; and a higher compliment than that it is beyond human power to convey. The tribute emphasises itself, so to speak, in the echoes of the applause as it hits against the huge glass roof at the end of each chorus ; and not more in one case than another, for all are alike superb, the four 12-inch records and the two part 10-inch record of *Lift up your heads*. These will rejoice the soul of every musical listener, whether he or she has ever attended a Handel Festival or not.

Royal Choral Society (Albert Hall).—Here is more "actuality" of a similar kind and only a degree less charged with emotional effect. Two of the noblest choruses in the *Messiah* are nobly sung by a choir that has never been surpassed in the history of the Albert Hall. The tone is magnificent, the steadiness, power, and clearness of the performance, conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent, beyond praise ; and the recording in each instance a triumph of which the H.M.V. have every right to feel proud. They have, by the way, secured the exclusive right of recording the Albert Hall performances.

Irmler Madrigal Choir.—There is no notable volume of sound in these Parlophone examples of choral singing. The voices appear to number a double quartet or not many more ; but they manage delicate effects very prettily, their tone is sweet, and their *nuances* of light and shade are artistic, not abrupt or overdone. The solo in the *Laudate Dominum* is neatly sung by Gertrude Baumann.

HERMAN KLEIN

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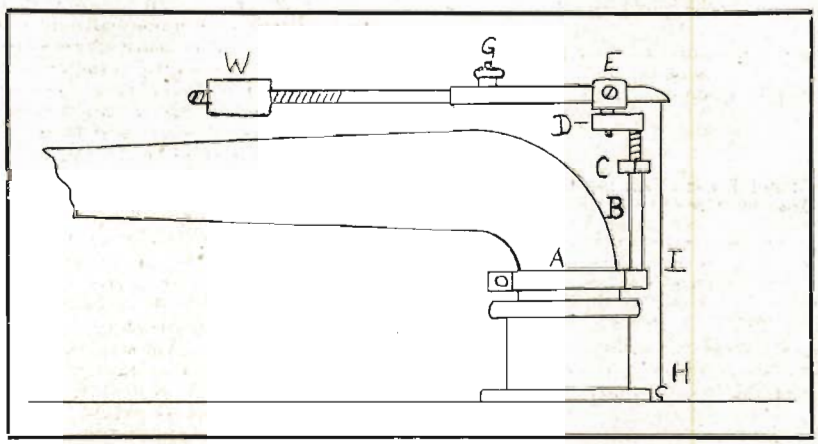
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THE W.S.A. weight adjuster has been designed for use with Columbia and other gramophones in which the up and down motion of the tone-arm is provided for by means of horizontal pivots, or by a ball joint, at the base of the tone-arm. With this pattern a substantial part of the weight of the tone-arm as well as that of the sound-box is pressing on to the record, causing excessive record wear, increased surface noise, undue strain on the motor and, in places, faulty reproduction.

The best weight to use depends partly on the sound-box and partly on the nature of the record. For records of chamber music and other lightly recorded pieces, a lighter weight on the record may be used than for heavy orchestral or vocal records. If a Lifebelt or other flexible connector is used, however, it is found that the best results are obtained for all records when the pressure on the record exactly equals the weight of the sound-box.

There are three important properties which every weight adjuster should possess:—

1. It should be "dead-beat"; that is, if it is moved from its position of rest it should return to that position *without oscillation*. If it does not do this it will cause the needle to "chatter" in the record groove and give rise to excessive record wear as well as to unpleasant noises. Adjusters which depend for their action upon the tension or compression of a spring are usually subject to this grave disadvantage.



2. It should not impose any side strain upon the tone-arm in any position. Otherwise the needle will press heavily against one side of the groove and ultimately break it down. This is the fault of many spring adjusters and also of some counter-balance devices.

3. The mass of the adjuster should not be so great as to interfere with the free passage of the tone-arm across the record. A certain amount of inertia in the tone-arm is, however, advantageous and it is also desirable to have sufficient pressure at the back of the tone-arm to keep it firmly on its bearings.

The W.S.A. adjuster is entirely novel in design and embodies all these essential features. It also has the further advantages of being attached to the tone-arm at one place only and that close to the base, where the metal is thickest; of being adjustable both in respect of its attachment to tone-arms of different sizes and in the amount of pressure which it will remove from the record; and of removing *slightly* more pressure at the outside grooves than at the inside.

It can be used on any "straight-arm" gramophone where the clearance between the back of the tone-arm and the cabinet is not less than ¼in. and where the clearance between the top of the tone-arm and the underside of the lid is not less than 1in.

Notes on Working.

The weight W is balanced by the tension in the cord I which, owing to the large ratio of leverage, is many times the weight. The actual pressure exerted at the back of the tone-arm is the sum of the weight W and the tension in the cord, together with the weight of the working parts. Thus, if the weight is ten times as far as the cord from the bearing E, then the tension is rather more than ten times the weight and the actual pressure exerted at the back of the tone-arm is more than eleven times the weight. *The further the weight W is screwed from the bearing E* (i.e., *towards* the sound-box) the greater the pressure at the back of the tone-arm and *the less the pressure on the record.*

The square part of the lever has been drilled with two holes through either of which the bolt in the bearing E may be inserted. The adjuster responds more effectively to sudden changes (e.g., on account of a warped record) when the bolt is fixed through the hole nearer the weight, though in that position the weight has less leverage and therefore does not relieve the record of quite so much pressure. With some gramophones, however, the lever cannot be used in this way on account of the small amount of clearance between the tone-arm and the sloping portion of the lid. For these machines the bolt on which the lever rocks must be inserted through the hole which is the farther from the weight.

Similarly the shoe D may be fixed pointing either directly towards the tone-arm or directly away from it or in any intermediate position. The adjuster will work effectively in any of these positions, provided that the clamp is so arranged that the pivot hole in the shoe D is in the centre-line of the tone-arm. It will exert more leverage, however, if the shoe points away from the tone-arm and if the clearance behind the tone-arm is sufficient, it is advisable to use it in that way and not as shown in the diagram.

When the tone-arm is moved across a record, the lever moves independently in its vertical bearing at E. This counteracts the tendency for the cord to exert a side-pull on the tone-arm. The cord, however, becomes slightly inclined to the vertical and this causes the pressure of the needle on the record to be slightly less at the outer grooves (where less weight is needed) than at the inner grooves.

WEIGHT ADJUSTERS for goose-neck tone arms, whether old or new H.M.V., are also supplied, with full particulars for fitting, price 7s. 6d. (postage 3d.)

When ordering ask for the W.G.N. Weight Adjuster and state make and model of machine.

THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W.1.

OPERATIC

FEODOR CHALIAPINE (bass).—**Ridda e fuga infernale** and with chorus, **Son lo spirito che nega** from **Mefistofele** (Boito). In Italian. Recorded at Covent Garden, May 31st. H.M.V., D.B.942, 12in., 8s. 6d.

DAME NELLIE MELBA (soprano).—**Donde lieta** from **Act III.** of **La Bohème** (Puccini) and **Farewell Speech.** Recorded at Covent Garden, June 8th. H.M.V., D.B.943, 12in., 8s. 6d.

MARION TALLEY (soprano).—**Caro Nome** from **Rigoletto** (Verdi) and **Una Voce** from **Barber of Seville** (Rossini). In Italian. H.M.V., D.B.936, 8s. 6d.

Comin' thro' the Rye and **Home, sweet Home** (Bishop). In English. H.M.V., D.A.783, 10in., 6s.

FRITZI JOKL (soprano).—**Cavatina de Rosina (Una Voce)** from the **Barber of Seville** (Rossini). In German. Parlophone E.10461, 12in., 4s. 6d.

ROBERT BURG (baritone).—**My Soul is sad** and **I have attained to power** from **Boris Godounov** (Moussorgsky). Parlophone E.10473, 12in., 4s. 6d.

EMMY BETTENDORF (soprano).—**Sie entfloh, die Taube, Romance of Antonia** from **Tales of Hoffmann** (Offenbach) and **Melodie, La Serenata** (Tosti). Parlophone E.10474, 12in., 4s. 6d.

GERTRUDE KAPPEL (soprano).—**Brünhildes Schlusgesang** from **Götterdämmerung** (Wagner)—**Starke Schelte, O ihr, der Eide ewige Hüter, Flieget heim, ihr Raben**—three sides, and **Pace, Pace, mio Dio** from **La Forza del Destino** (Verdi). Polydor 66099 and 66100, 12in., 5s. 9d. each.

MARIA OLSZEWSKA (contralto) and **EMIL SCHIPPER** (bass).—**Ha! dann begriff ich sein Verbot** (Ortrud-Telramund duet) from **Lohengrin** (Wagner), in three parts, and **Liebst du mich treu und innig** (with chorus) from **Carmen** (Bizet). In German. Polydor 72989 and 72990, 12in., 6s. 9d. each.

ULYSSES LAPPAS (tenor).—**Celeste Aïda** from **Aïda** (Verdi) and **Cielo e mar** from **La Gioconda** (Ponchielli). In Italian. Col. L.1762, 12in., 6s. 6d.

HEDDLE NASH (tenor).—**Una furtiva lagrima** from **L'Elisir d'Amore** (Donizetti) and **O Paradiso** from **L'Africana** (Meyerbeer). In English. Col. 9104, 12in., 4s. 6d.

LAURI-VOLPI (tenor).—**Racconto di Rodolfo (Che gelida manina)** from **La Bohème** (Puccini) and **Quando nascesti tu** from **Act II.** of **Lo Schiavo** (Gomez). In Italian. Brunswick 50073, 12in., 8s.

Feodor Chaliapin.—The practical application of the new method of electrical recording at any distance is already resulting in achievements that are calculated, to put it mildly, to take one's breath away. (Not a good thing for singers, I know, but not particularly harmful to the listener.) I was much struck, a few weeks ago, at the amazing qualities of the organ record made by the H.M.V. of Mr. Herbert Dawson's performance at Kingsway Hall (fifteen miles away !) of Boëllman's *Suite Gothique ;* but until the present month I had never been called upon to criticise records of the human voice made from a similar distance. It is indeed a new and wonderful experience, for it so happens that in each of these instances I had heard the actual performance itself, and without having the smallest notion of what the microphone was enabling the instrument and its manipulator to accomplish in the recording room. One can only ask oneself, "What limit is there going to be to this sort of thing ?"

It was a good idea to attempt the reproduction from a Covent Garden performance of a musical episode so characteristic and individual, and also in a sense elusive, as that of the Brocken Scene in Boïto's opera, *Mefistofele.* Knowing its difficulties and complexities as I do, I should have been quite prepared to predict failure for this experiment, instead of which here it is (H.M.V., D.B.942), a gorgeous and unqualified success, a triumph of realism and "atmosphere" that would have been utterly unattainable under any other conditions. It gives you Mefistofele's pæan of self-glorification, *Son lo spirito che nega,* with the demon Chaliapin, so to speak, in his own dæmonic element, and as he alone *when there* is capable of delivering it. Need I say more ? Only that, after he has finished it, you can turn your disc over and hear him pitching his strange ejaculations and shouts of encouragement into the midst of the dance of witches and devils, the tremendous *Ridda e fuga infernale* which succeeds it. The effect of this terrific dance and fugue, as executed in rhythmic chorus with untiring energy, is simply indescribable. Nothing like it has ever been heard viâ the gramophone before.

The Melba Farewell.—Here is another miracle—and an amazing contrast into the bargain. It has far less musical value, of course, but, on the other hand, it provides a most welcome souvenir of a highly interesting occasion. We have first of all the actual sounds of Melba's voice singing for the last time at Covent Garden the suave and silvery utterances of Mimi (H.M.V., D.B.943) from the third act of *La Bohème ;* also, on the reverse side, the intensely emotional little speech of thanks, broken by irrepressible sobs, wherein the artist acknowledged the more formal address of Lord Stanley of Alderley, and not omitting the storm of applause that followed. The floral display alone is missing !

Marion Talley.—This unfamiliar Anglo-Saxon name connotes a new prima donna of American birth (? and training) who made her début amid much local excitement at the Metropolitan Opera House last winter. Her records of *Una voce* and *Caro nome* (H.M.V., D.B.936) prove her to be the possessor of a very pure, strong soprano voice, running easily up into *alt* with a clear, vibrant tone and showing flexibility alike in scales, shake, and staccato. The method, however, is perceptibly of the machine-made order and it gives a distinct impression of frigidity. The Italian is "choice" and easily distinguishable, and on the whole I prefer it to her English, which the same singer makes manifest in *Comin' thro' the rye* and *Home, sweet home* (H.M.V., D.A.783). Her tone in these old songs suggests that she sang them without a suspicion of a smile.

Fritzi Jokl.—As an exemplification of the same *bravura* school of singing this Parlophone record of *Una voce* is the exact antipode of that just noticed. Fritzi Jokl's voice does not seem to reach us through some mechanical agency ; it is the voice itself. It is human, it rings true, it is musical in its natural sweetness and pellucid clearness. Technically it is also impeccable ; the attack is clean ; all the *fioriturі* and scales are faultlessly executed ; the staccato is like a shower of pearls. Really I have seldom heard a more delightful rendering of this hackneyed aria. What is also important, the German words flow lightly and easily—for a wonder ! —and the long sustained high C at the end is quite lovely. The *Caro nome* is equally perfect in its way.

Robert Burg.—Personally I have not the slightest objection to the clever imitations of Chaliapin furnished by the German *basso cantante* in his two selections from *Boris Godounov.* He could not have taken a more inspiring model whereby to display his own fine organ or to realise the dramatic impressiveness of a historical character that Moussorgsky's opera has enabled the great Russian singer to make his own. Robert Burg has caught the peculiar tone of forlorn and hopeless misery to perfection, and except when he gives us a touch of that jerky, grunting creature, Alberich, his style is the identical thing. By the way, the recording and accompanying of the above four excerpts are creditable to the Parlo. *atelier.*

Emmy Bettendorf.—Neither Antonia's monotonous air from the *Tales of Hoffmann* nor the well-known *Serenata* of Paolo Tosti was calculated to show this admirable artist to the best advantage. She does her best with them, and that is all I can say. Patti's (H.M.V.) record of *La Serenata* still remains the only authentic rendering.

Gertrude Kappel.—It seems to me that these latest examples of the new electrical recording bring the voice into brighter relief than the orchestra, which for the most part sounds somewhat opaque and blurred in quality. We have just had at Covent Garden a splendid sample of Gertrude Kappel's mastery of Brünnhilde's music, and I think that with a little stronger support she would be capable of an even finer interpretation of the *Closing Scene* from *Götterdämmerung* than that exhibited in the present triple record. Nevertheless, it is quite adequate, whilst the air from *La Forza del Destino* on the reverse side of Part III. forms a welcome supplement.

Maria Olszewska and Emil Schipper.—Lovers of *Lohengrin* (in German) will doubtless be glad to get this faithful reproduction by two excellent singers of that long duet in the dark between Ortrud and Telramund, which some people used to regard as a rare opportunity for "forty winks." It occupies three sides of two discs, with a rousing contrast on the fourth in the shape of the choral entry of the Toreador and the succeeding gem of brief duet from the last act of *Carmen.* Olszewska is irresistible as usual, but Dr. Schipper seems more at home vocally in Telramund's penitential garb than in the gorgeous satin and gold of the bullfighter, who needs a lighter touch.

Ulysses Lappas.—The singing of *Cielo e mar* is very fine—finer on the whole than that of *Celeste Aïda.* The full, round tone of

the Greek tenor (who made his début here in 1919) never came out so clear and strong, so reminiscent of the Caruso richness, before. His B flat is not phenomenal, but up to A natural he has a splendid scale and his breath-control is first rate. The recording of both airs is unexceptionable.

Heddle Nash.—This young tenor, who has been singing a good deal and with invariable success at the "Old Vic," has a voice of such natural beauty and power and a style so pleasing that a distinguished career seems certain for him. He must, however, beware of a slight *tremolo* (a fault that is apt to grow) when in sentimental mood; and his enunciation of English is decidedly imperfect, the consonants being especially defective. The air from *L'Africaine* is the better of the two.

Giacomo Lauri-Volpi.—Yet another operatic tenor who has sung at Covent Garden and in his big moments is well worth listening to. His rendering of Rodolfo's air from Act I of *La Bohème* is excellent, but less interesting, because more familiar, than that of the *Quando nascesti tu* from *Lo Schiavo*, an opera by Gomez that was produced at Rio de Janeiro in 1889. This has some effective snatches of melody in the modern Italian style and they show the singer's voice to advantage, particularly his high B natural, when, as in this case, he happens to have a good one.

HERMAN KLEIN.

SONGS

BELTONA.

Harry Drummond (baritone): **In Summertime on Bredon** (Graham Peel) and **Wilt thou be my dearie ?** (Hurlstone). 1007 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

John van Zyl (bass) with orchestra: **Quaff with me the purple wine** (Shield) and **Drake goes West** (Sanderson). 7005 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Jean Summers (soprano): **The Laughing Song** (Auber's **Manon Lescaut**) and **Will o' the Wisp** (Spross). 6056 (10in., 3s.).

Hughes Macklin (tenor): **Margery Grey** (Cecil Moon) and **Let me be near you** (Charles Desmond). 6055 (10in., 3s.).

Harry Drummond's name is not new to Beltona's catalogue, but if I have had any previous record of his, the music must have been so bad as to deafen me to the smooth, warm tones of his voice, and to his always pleasing use of it. This record, a half-crowner, could safely be compared with most expensive discs, though the piano rather lets it down. You may search long for a better record of Graham Peel's quietly effective song. (It is possible to feel that Butterworth's *Shropshire Lad* settings are all somewhere near perfect, yet at the same time to retain all the force of one's love for this setting by Graham Peel—a fact which reveals much concerning the natures and relationships of music and poetry.) The Hurlstone song is the less good of the two which John Thorne sang last month. There is practically nothing to choose between his performance and Drummond's. Drummond's interpretations are a little *too* musical; verbal sense is not enough considered in his phrasing. His diction would bear a little clarifying.

A good pair, with a good orchestral backing, is *John van Zyl* and William Shield's bluff Handelian drinking-song. On the other side of the same disc, the music is not quite equal to the singer, though it may be superficially impressive. Van Zyl does not know how to pronounce English *u* vowel-sounds.

In *The Laughing Song, Jean Summers* shows great *coloratura* powers. There are some of the best high leaps and one of the most brilliant scales of C major I have ever heard. In *Will o' the Wisp* time and words are both largely ignored. In these two songs Jean Summer's tremolo shows up less than usual, but it is still there.

Another dealer in wobble is *Hughes Macklin*. Beltona fans will know that he has a voice of some power and quality. They will also know the kind of music he generally sings.

When will Beltona do something about the piano in their song accompaniments ?

VOCALION.

Clara Serena (contralto) accompanied by Roy Mellish: **The Second Minuet** (Maurice Besly) and **Silver threads among the gold** (Danks-Mellish). K.05240 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Malcolm McEachern (bass): **Up from Somerset** (Sanderson) with orchestra and **Land of delight** (Sanderson) accompanied by Stanley Chapple. K.05241 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Frank Titterton (tenor) accompanied by Stanley Chapple: **Songs my mother taught me** (Dvorák) and **I'll sing thee songs of Araby** (Clay). X.9817 (10in., 3s.).

Kathleen Destournel (soprano) with orchestra: **Indian Love Call** from **Rose Marie** (Friml) and **Just my way of loving you** (Rivers). X.9820 (10in., 3s.).

Gladys Moncrieff (soprano) with orchestra: **Good-bye** (Tosti) and **Home, sweet home** (Bishop). K.05242 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Clara Serena's rich, dark tone seems to record better than almost any contralto's, though these two songs are too consistently quiet and in the low register for one to judge whether she would always record so well. Certainly in *The Second Minuet* she is nearly ideal. This is a song which will, at times, suit many fancies. It tells how grandmama met grandpapa at grandmama's first ball. Clara Serena's clear utterance is gained by rather pedantic care. Also, I wish she wouldn't sing "minuet" as if it was "minu-et"—indeed, she has rather noticeably the English vice (or did it come from Germany ?) of breaking the flow of tone for certain syllables.

It is hard to find anything to say of the other Vocalion records. *McEachern* is exactly as usual (with a good low C), in music which does not provide one with anything to discuss. *Titterton's* is not a valuable addition to the innumerable recordings of *Songs my mother taught me;* the same may be said of his other song; and his tremolo covers its full range. *Kathleen Destournel* is now giving us extracts from musical comedies of the moment (or, shall we say, of the month). The more allurement there is in such music as this, the more pernicious it is. In *Just my way* there is, in one or two places, some shocking orchestral playing (even if one accepts the orchestral style in general) and Miss Destournel sings occasionally not quite in tune and with a suspicion of a tremolo.

Gladys Moncrieff s clear, liquid voice is very sympathetic to the tried old favourites she has sung.

COLUMBIA.

Thelma Petersen (mezzo-soprano): **The Dreary Steppe** (Newmarch and Grechaninov) and (with piano and organ) **Aftermath** (Lockton and Cleaver). 3986 (10in., 3s.).

Rex Palmer (baritone): **To Anthea** (Herrick and Hatton) and **To Mary** (Shelley and M. V. White). 3988 (10in., 3s.).

Dora Labbette (soprano): **At the rainbow's end** from **Sunset Land** (Salmon and Landon Ronald) and **Song of a Nightingale** (Hart and M. Phillips). D.1548 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

W. F. Watt (tenor) with orchestra: **The fairy tales of Ireland** (Lockton and E. Coates) and **Little town in Ould County Down** (Pascoe, Carlo and Sanders). 3977 (10in., 3s.).

I feel I ought to know of *Thelma Petersen*—either in her professional history or in gramophonic history. But if this is a first record, it is one to be noted well. Her diction and a slight tendency to let the voice wobble both need watching. But voice and temperament and personality are very much all there, especially for those glorious Russian songs of the type of the favourite, *The Dreary Steppe*. (In the title to this, by the way, Newmarch obviously signifies the translator from the Russian—Rosa Newmarch, our well-known specialist in Russian music.) The final sustained note of *The Dreary Steppe* is badly off pitch. *Aftermath*, sung with an alleged organ, is very suggestive of the Oxford Street pavement; and in it Thelma Petersen's two chief faults are decidedly greater.

Uncle Rex continues to give recordings which will not disappoint wireless listeners who know him. But his tone gets rather too dark, and he seems to be developing a tremolo.

There is disparity between the music of *Dora Labbette's* recent concert work and that of her latest recordings. This record is taking, and well done, of course. On the gramophone she is particularly good in clear top notes.

There is not much to say of *W. F. Watt*. He has a voice with some possibilities, but he adopts the style of his songs so well that one is driven to doubt if he could do subtler work.

It may be accidental, but Columbia are giving rather a lot of short measure on their ten-inch song records.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

Robert Radford (bass) with orchestra: **All one gets from plaguey daughters** and **Maidens all are stubborn creatures** (Bach's **Coffee and Cupid**, arr. Sanford Terry). E.431 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Paul Robeson (bass): **Negro spirituals—Sometimes I feel like a motherless child** (arr. Brown) and **On ma journey** (arr. Boatner). B.2326 (10in., 3s.).

Leila Megane (contralto): **Twilight fancies** and **Sweet Venevil** (Delius). E.430 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Eric Marshall (baritone) accompanied by Maurice Jacobson: **Du bist wie eine Blume** and **Die Lotosblume** (Schumann). E.433 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Emilio de Gogorza (baritone, in Spanish) with orchestra: **La Paloma (The Dove)** (Yradier) and **La Golondrina (The Swallow)** (Mexican Air). D.A.782 (10in., 6s.).

George Baker (baritone): **If there were dreams to sell** (J. Ireland) and **I heard you singing** (Eric Coates). B.2317 (10in., 3s.).

Harry Dearth (bass): **Ben Backstay** and **Dorothy's a buxom lass** (arr. Howard Carr). E.429 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): **Simon the Cellarer** (Hatton) and **The Pride of Tipperary** (Lockhead). B.2324 (10in., 3s.).

Sydney Coltham (tenor): **At the mid-hour of night** (Cowen) and **At dawning** (Cadman). B.2323 (10in., 3s.).

John McCormack (tenor) with orchestra: **Through all the days to be** (Melville Hope) and **A brown bird singing** (Haydn Wood). D.A.780 (10in., 6s.).

Shannon Male Quartet: Carry me back to old Virginny (Bland). **Peerless Male Quartet: Good-night, I'll see you in the morning** (Roettger, Small). B.2321 (10in., 3s.).

De Reszke Singers (male quartet): **My Lady Chloe** (Clough Leighter) and **Absent** (Metcalf), unaccompanied. E.432 (10in. 4s. 6d.).

If anyone knows a gramophone record better than *Radford's* for giving one the alleged Kruschen feeling, I should be grateful to be told of it. Foremost, of course, there is the material itself. Among the best work of the British National Opera Company must be reckoned their staging of two simple, happy-go-lucky yet masterly pieces of Bach. The first was *Phœbus and Pan*. They have recently followed this with *Coffee and Cupid*, a dramatisation by Dr. Sanford Terry (noted Bach scholar) of the little *Coffee Canata*. If you can see any good in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas, or (a closer analogy) in the *Beggar's Opera*, you can safely trust these fulsome praises of the Bach extracts. *Coffee and Cupid* deals with the strife between a die-hard of a father, and a typically "modern" daughter. In Bach's time coffee-drinking was just coming into fashion and was regarded as reprehensible in the best young ladies, as cigarette-smoking was a decade or two ago. Lieschen's father gives her the choice between coffee-drinking and a husband. Needless to say, she secures both.

I am not sure that *All one gets* is expressive of parental wrath so much as bursting with sheer joyous energy. Or are one's feelings about it similar to the exhilaration of watching a stage father, a vigorous old man, full of spirit, trying to be really angry, but merely a bit irritated? Anyhow, it is very delightful.

I haven't yet seen the B.N.O.C.'s production of *Coffee and Cupid*, but if Radford's record is typical, he must send everyone away in the best of moods. Here the whole performance and recording are splendidly perfect—in fact, it is just like being present at an ideal production. On these new process records it is as though we were in the actual presence of some *new varieties* of the various instrumental groups, but I think H.M.V. are gradually improving tonal faithfulness—strings, which are worst, are, I think, becoming less strident. The unnamed conductor and string orchestra are first-rate in music which exacts both great neatness and verve. Radford's last record (*Father O'Flynn*) was an object-lesson in diction. There are moments almost as good on this latest. Records such as this positively inspire one to write about them.

There can be few more beautiful records issued than *Paul Robeson's* Negro Spirituals. Even if *On ma journey* leaves one cold, I don't see how anyone with any sense of real poetry and music can miss its abstract beauty. I have made a very interesting proof of Robeson's rhythmic perfection. I tried to take down, from the record, what may be called the first verse of *On ma journey*. The task is very intricate indeed, as the rhythm is extraordinarily complex and subtle. I was able to test my success and also Robeson's absolute rhythmic perfection, since the first verse recurs as a sort of refrain. The second time it is sung exactly as the first time, without the difference of a fraction of one beat. Would that most would-be singers of "art songs" would come within sight of this ideal!

The songs of *Delius*, almost as much as his large-scale works, are potentially food for some attractive discussion of styles, idioms, and methods, and artistic principles. Recently I wrote about his setting of Herrick's *To Daffodils*, recorded by Muriel Brunskill. This is one of his later songs (1915). Of the two we now have from *Leila Megane*, one is early, and I suspect the other is fairly early. Both are if anything the better for that; they are more definitely tuneful, and in style do at least suit the simple lyrical poems better according to accepted ideas. Though both have more than a touch of individuality, they are very derivative. Grieg, Mendelssohn, perhaps even Schumann and some others, are recalled. But most of all, these two songs suggest the lesser Scandinavian composers—Kjerulf and Jensen, for instance. *Venevil* (given on the label as *Sweet Venevil*) is, in fact, a setting of a poem by Björnsen, and is one of *Seven Songs from the Norwegian* (1889–90). I cannot place *Twilight Fancies*, though the poem seems very familiar—its first line is: "The princess looked forth from her turreted keep." Both songs have light, delicate charm. Perhaps it is hardly necessary to say that Leila Megane is one of the best of all contraltos. She is perfectly recorded. Her diction is excellent, though some of the words of these songs are not obvious, and are difficult to catch. The pianist has not *very* much to do, but does that little so extremely well that one would like to be told her (or his) name.

Every month one plays the new *Eric Marshall* record with high expectancy; but he has not yet reached the very top class. Rhythmic flow and phrasing still need perfecting. His conceptions of good things are still influenced by the pernicious distortions and exaggerations which need to be applied to give artificial life to the lower orders of song literature. Marshall doesn't seem yet to realise that *real* songs need full comprehension, apprehension, and perfect singing, and then to be left largely to speak for themselves. Given this, he should then make the comparatively short step needed to place him in the front rank. It is "the right spirit" in him that makes one look for this at any moment.

After all that was said by Mr. Klein of *de Gogorza* last month, it is a pleasure to find his *La Paloma* re-recorded. All that need be said here is that this record is worthy of him.

If there were dreams to sell is hardly the best Ireland. It is rather lacking in positive quality. Still, it has a certain quiet sympathy with the mood of the poem. Much the same may be said of the Coates—in fact, it is still less definitely good! Baker is adequately good, except in diction.

Harry Dearth sings a pair of fine old English sea songs which must not be overlooked by any tastes. But surely *Ben Backstay* is made far too slow and heavy in parts? Both songs are fairly well arranged by Howard Carr, who is better known as a conductor than as a writer of music. I hope Dearth will go on with the type of song he has lately recorded.

Has *Peter Dawson* ever been known to sing anything which he doesn't make immensely effective, if the song possibly allows him to?—though I think he's rather peremptory in his treatment of *Simon the Cellarer;* as though he treated it disrespectfully. But he gets extraordinary characterisation in it, if rather broad. *The Pride of Tipperary* is just perfect—delicious. It is worthy to be an Irish folk-song. Other singers please note in it the diction and phrasing.

At the mid-hour of night is on the border-line between real music and make-believe. It has a legitimate appeal to some tastes. *At Dawning* is on the wrong side of the line. Coltham adapts himself to each.

There is nothing to buy *McCormack's* record for except his voice.

The *Shannon Quartet* are highly efficient. *Good-night* is in the jazz idiom; it is very luscious, and excellently, even tastefully, done by the *Peerless Quartet*. But it is too sickly, not to mention the fact that it would become very monotonous.

The record of the *De Reszke Quartet* should not be missed by enthusiasts of conventional male-quartet music. There are, however, imperfections of pitch and "chording," as they say at musical competitions. *Absent* unfortunately belies its title; it is ever with us.

C. M. C.

Note.—July Dance Records will be reviewed in Richard Herbert's half-yearly survey in the September number.

NEW-POOR RECORDS

(Machine used, Peridulce Cabinet; sound-box, Peridulce; needles, Euphonic.)

THE inclusion of a few records left over from last month helps to make a truly wonderful budget.

ACO.—Another of Peggy Cochrane's excellent VIOLIN solos heads the list, *Mazurka in A minor* (2s. 6d.). John Thorne, BARITONE, sings Schubert's *Who is Sylvia?* (2s. 6d.) with his accustomed ease and sweetness. There is a good PIANOFORTE recording (2s. 6d.) of a selection from the *Lady be Good* music.

BELTONA.—A glorious 12in. record of a pair of songs sung by Jan Van Zyl, BASS, heads this list; it contains the very best rendering both in the solo and in the accompaniment (listen to the kettledrums) I ever heard of *Drake goes West* (4s. 6d.); every consonant comes out, too, and without effort on the part of the singer. A half-crown BASS recording of a couple of songs by Manuel Hemingway follows it closely for quality; in *Drinking* he makes what is easily the best record of this song I have, and shows a glorious two-octave voice to wonderful advantage. Losowsky makes a light record of the Fibich *Poëm* with his VIOLIN (3s.). There is an IRISH number of a couple of violin and piano dances, *The Boys of the Lough* (2s. 6d.). A real new-poor number is the light ORCHESTRAL rendering of Grieg's No. 3 *Norwegian Dance* (2s. 6d.).

COLISEUM.—These records have a grand new home at 67–69, City Road, E.C. They are really remarkable among the half-crown class of records for selection and unusually good coupling. All the sweet-sounding WALTZES by the Melody Marimba Band are very good and entirely delightful to all young people; I instance particularly *Sometime* and *Take me back to your heart.* We are promised shortly a re-issue of the dear old *Forest Memories*, which no one should miss, to be followed by some classical string work.

HOMOCHORD.—There is no Tango this month owing to want of support by the public. These magnificent electrical recordings are concert numbers in every way, apart from their dance value. Buy *Sentimento Gaucho* (2s. 6d.), which I mentioned recently and you will want all the others. Equivalent examples in a FOX-TROT, *Dreaming of a castle in the air* (2s. 6d.) and of a WALTZ, *Mignonette* (2s. 6d.), are issued this month. There is a 12in. ORGAN solo, *Coronation March* (*Il Profeta*), 4s.

IMPERIAL.—A few months ago there was some correspondence about Sirota's wonderful TENORE ROBUSTO records. These 12in. discs originally 6s. 6d. each, are to be re-issued at 5s. They are quite the finest examples of this class of voice in Italian opera that I have; they are concert demonstration records in every way because the voice, though free from harshness, has a ringing characteristic such as has no equal in any other record in my collection. One pair has orchestral accompaniment, *Celeste Aïda* and *E lucevan e Stella*, and the other pair pianoforte accompaniment, *Ah, si ben Mio* and *Di quella pica*. Another of Teddy Brown's records I like is *Two little cups and saucers* (2s.).

PARLOPHONE.—Fritzi Jokl, SOPRANO, has challenged Galli-Curci (and very effectively, too,) by making a double-sided 12in. record of the great *Una voce* cavatina (*in full*) from Rossini's *Barber of Seville* (4s. 6d.). Edith Lorand is at her best in *The Waltz Dream*, selection, two discs at 4s. 6d. each. A new instrumental quartette (violin, 'cello, harp, and mustel organ) give a truly glorious rendering of Carl Schneidler's *Concerto Romance in G* (4s. 6d.). Vincent Lopez has a good JAZZ rendering of *Dorothy* (2s. 6d.). Until to-day I thought the Vincent Lopez records incomparable of their kind, but after hearing Ronnie Munro's half-crown discs from *Lady, be Good* I must in fairness say that in several points his work eclipses that of the great American and is in no particular inferior to it.

REGAL.—Again we have an issue of high class 12in. records. All lovers of the exquisite surface these records have should get the INSTRUMENTAL TRIO, Schubert's *Serenade* (4s.). Kenneth Walters, BARITONE, is as good as ever in *An old garden.*

VELVET FACE AND WINNER.—First among these I put the splendid record of Ketelbey's *Cockney Suite* on three half-crown discs by 2LO Military Band (with kettledrums). Miss Marie Novello's lightly recorded PIANOFORTE solos come next, *Etude in E minor* (Chopin), 4s. There is a good 12in. ORCHESTRAL record of a well-chosen and arranged selection from *Aïda*. Gounod's exceedingly pretty *Romeo and Juliette* music forms a satisfactory basis for a double-sided 12in. record (4s.) that is the best I have by the Palladium OCTETTE. A half-crown record of high class ORCHESTRAL music is Ansell's *Plymouth Hoe.* Truly a wonderful budget!

ZONOPHONE.—A sonorous SACRED number is a 12in. double-sided at 4s., *Gloria* (Twelfth Mass) and the *Hallelujah Chorus*, by Trinity Church Choir and organ.

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—ORCHESTRAL: 12in., *The Waltz Dream*, second disc (PARLO.). 10in., *Norwegian Dances* (BELTONA). SOPRANO: *Barber of Seville* (PARLO.). TENORE ROBUSTO: *Celeste Aïda* (IMPERIAL). BARITONE: *Who is Sylvia?* (ACO). BASS, 12in.: *Drake goes West* (BELTONA). VIOLIN: *Mazurka in A minor* (ACO). INSTRUMENTAL QUARTETTE: *Concerto Romance* (PARLO.). FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE: *Sometime Waltz* (COLISEUM). JAZZ: *Lady, be Good* (PARLO.). SACRED: *Gloria* (ZONO.). TANGO: *Sentimento Gaucho* (HOMO.). FOX-TROT: *Dreaming of a castle in the air* (HOMO.). MILITARY BAND (with kettledrums): *Cockney Suite* (V.F.). PIANOFORTE: *Etude in E minor* (V.F.).

H. T. B.

MISCELLANEOUS

The most important records in my lot this month are those of the **Aldershot Command Searchlight Tattoo.** Three are H.M.V. (C.1268, 1269, and 1270, 12in., 4s. 6d. each) and two are Columbia (9109 and 9110, 12in., 4s. 6d. each). There is nothing to choose therefore in the prices. The H.M.V. records were made at the actual performance, the Columbia under studio conditions or, if in the open air, under conditions arranged by the recording experts. Though the programme of both is much the same, the Columbia records contain relatively more than the H.M.V.; but the first of the H.M.V.'s (C.1268) has the *Aïda Selection*, played magnificently by the massed bands, an effect unobtainable by the Grenadier Guards Band on Columbia with *In a Chinese Temple Garden* as a substitute.

These five records are to be sent to the band expert for his review next month. For the present all that I can say is that the H.M.V. records are a most valuable souvenir of the actual performance at Aldershot. Listening to them with their suggestion of the wide spaces, the distant singing, the vast murmuring audience, I feel every time the thrill of seeing the pipers coming out of the wood, nearer and nearer, and forming a great circle in the middle distance, and then receding again into the gloom, while the singing of the hymn, the *Last Post* and *God save the King* (on C.1269) are authentic records of a great memory. It is not likely that anyone who went to the Tattoo will prefer the Columbia version; but it is quite likely that the unprejudiced may find it more efficient. Personally, I take off my hat to H.M.V. with genuine admiration and gratitude.

The **Keep Fit** brigade who do the exercises of Mr. A. Wallace Jones will be glad to know of the album issued by H.M.V. with two records and full descriptions of the twelve exercises (B.2305 and 2306, 3s. each). If I were not a confirmed Müllerite I should certainly try Mr. Jones's system; but no doubt the records with their rather crude musical accompaniments are intended for classes rather than for the individual.

De Groot takes pride of place this month with a re-recording of the *Orphée aux Enfers Selection* (Offenbach) charming music, splendidly played and recorded (H.M.V., C.1262, 4s. 6d.). There is No. 3 of Grieg's *Norwegian Dances* on Beltona 1018 (2s. 6d.) with *Anitra's Dance* on the other side, well-played; a *Children's Suite* by John Ansell on Regal G.8621 and 8622 (2s. 6d. each) which is rather thin but likely to be popular. It is amusing to get a *Mikado Selection* as played by **Edith Lorand's Orchestra** (Parlo. E.10470, 4s. 6d.) with great finesse; but I prefer her in the music of her native land.

Of instrumental pieces, the best is the **String Ensemble** (violin, 'cello, and organ) in two Schumann pieces (H.M.V., B.2320, 3s.); the Mustel organ alone is a little dreary in Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* and the Tannhäuser *Pilgrim's Chorus* (Regal G.8624, 2s. 6d.), but it's a capital record to have handy for suitable occasions. **Percival Mackey** is extremely good, as one would expect, in two piano solos from *Lady, Be Good* (Col. 4000, 3s.), preferable, on the whole, to **Perrella and Turner** in piano duets of *Kitten on the Keys* and *Nola* (H.M.V., B.2322, 3s.). But the latter record is a *tour de force* in its way. There are two Hawaiian records (H.M.V., B.2315, 3s., and Parlo. E.5610, 2s. 6d.), an Irish bagpipes record (H.M.V., B.2308, 3s.) and a xylophone record (Parlo. E.5609, 2s. 6d.) by **Billy Whitlock.**

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Two Little Cups and Saucers (Alwyn and Scott).

1609 { **Pearl of Malabar** (Merolle and Nicholls).
What about Me ? (Russell, Campbell and Connolly).

1608 { **Just a Cottage Small** (Sylva and Hanley). Tenor Solo by Hugh Donovan. Orchestral Accomp.
At Peace with the World (I. Berlin). Tenor Solo by Irving Kaufman. Orchestral Accomp.

1607 { **Horses** (Whiting-Gay). Tenor Solo by Billy Jones. Orchestral Accomp.
Sleepy Time Gal (Alden, Egan, Lorenzo-Whiting). Tenor Solo by Irving Kaufman. Orchestral Accomp.



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1603 { **The Bullfighters.** (March.) C. Kottaun.
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Dances

SAM LANIN'S DANCE ORCHESTRA.

1602 { **Just a Cottage Small** (Sylva and Hanley). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, H. Donovan.)
Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue (Lewis Henderson). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, Arthur Hall).

HOLLYWOOD DANCE ORCHESTRA.

1601 { **Thanks for the Buggy Ride** (Jules Buffano). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, Arthur Hall.)
Horses (Whiting-Gay). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, I. Kaufman.)

1600 { **At Peace with the World** (Irving Berlin). Waltz. (Vocal Chorus, I. Kaufman.)
Truly I Do (Palmer-Williams). Waltz. (Vocal Chorus, I. Kaufman.)

IMPERIAL DANCE ORCHESTRA.

1599 { **Honeybunch** (Cliff Friend). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, I. Kaufman.)
Let's Grow Old Together (Brockman-Oakland-Schuster). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus, I. Kaufman.)

A SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF NEW TITLES WILL BE ISSUED MONTHLY.

Apply for particulars to the Crystalate Mfg. Co., Ltd., Town Works, Tonbridge, Kent, the oldest makers of Disc Records in Great Britain.

London dealers should write for supplies to 63, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

People who like **The Revellers,** as I do, will enjoy equally **The Singing Sophomores** (Sof'morees, *on dit*) in *Honey Mine* and *Georgianna* (Col. 4001, 3s.) and perhaps even more **The Merry-makers** in *Sweet Child* and *My Castle in Spain* (Brunswick, 3059, 3s.). I find them charming under good conditions, and shall not be surprised to be told that they are all the same singers recording under different names.

" Good conditions " reminds me that people sometimes complain that I recommend records which are excruciating on their machines. I use an H.M.V. new model No. 511 with a No. 4 and Petmecky needles in a large room with a door into the garden ; so very few records with the modern standard of recording are unbearable and all are heard at their very best.

Of the thirty song records which I have heard, the best pieces of recording are **Layton and Johnstone** in *Dreaming of a Castle in the Air* and *Headin' for Louisville* (Col. 4003, 3s.), one of their best ; and **William Burr** (tenor) in *Yokohama* and *Feelin' kind o' Blue* (Regal G.8636, 2s. 6d.). I should not buy the latter except for the recording. **Jack Smith,** who is perhaps not at his very best in *I'd climb the highest mountain* and *I don't believe it, but say again* (H.M.V., B.2319, 3s.), because they are poorish songs, is being imitated now, notably by **Harry Shalson** in *Feelin' kind of blue* and *Cecilia* (Imperial 1605, 2s.) ; but his record is well worth the extra shilling. Congratulations to Imperial on the new label on their records—a great improvement ; also on the singing of **Peter Rush** and of **Irving Kaufman,** both pleasant voices in rather hackneyed songs. I prefer the former in *Pearl of Malabar* (Imperial 1609, 2s.) to **Robert English** (Parlo. E.5612, 2s. 6d.), but the latter has *Mariette* with an attractive rhythm on the reverse.

Thanks for the buggy ride is an absurd song well sung by **Jones and Hare** on Imperial 1606 (2s.), with *Then I'll be happy* ; but better is the **Frank Crumit** version on H.M.V., B.2325 (3s.) with an even more absurdly attractive *Billy Boy* on the reverse. **Tom Gilbert** (Regal G.8635, 2s. 6d.) and **Bruce Wallace** (Parlo. E.5611, 2s. 6d.) are very loud and need toning down ; **Billy Desmond** (Aco), **Arthur Cox** (Zono.), and **Foster Richardson** (Zono.) are up to their standards, and **Dick Henderson,** who amused Royalty, gives us his *Yorkshire* and *Lancashire* on one record (Aco G.16013, 2s. 6d.) instead of separated as on the Imperial records which I noticed some time ago. **Scovell and Wheldon** in two songs from *Lady, Be Good* are soothing and attractive as usual (Parlo. E.5614, 2s. 6d.). **Gene Gerrard** backs the capital *Wine, Women and Song* of Wolseley Charles with the idiotic *Laying the odds* (Voc. X.9821, 3s.).

There are three notable Brunswick records, besides that already mentioned : **Wendell Hall** in *Let's talk about my Sweetie* and *Just around the corner* (3085, 3s.) ; **Nick Lucas,** " the crooning troubadour," in *I don't believe it* and the favourite *Always* (3088, 3s.) and **Charles Kaley** (3071, 3s.), a newcomer assisted by Abe Lyman's Orchestra, in *Don't wake me up* and *After I say I'm sorry.* These are well worth hearing, and benefit by the new recording.

I was disappointed by H.M.V., B.2318, which ought to be so good and is so much overdone ; but **Sir Harry Lauder's** re-recording of *Stop your tickling, Jock* and the *Lass of Killiecrankie* is first-rate (H.M.V., D.1106, 4s. 6d.) and another *Student Prince* record from Columbia (9057, 4s. 6d.) with the *Serenade* and *Deep in my heart, dear,* sung by **Harry Welchman** and **Rose Hignell,** will have many buyers.

A good selection for those who have to order records without hearing them would be : H.M.V., C.1262, de Groot ; Brunswick 3059, the Merrymakers ; Col. 4003, Layton and Johnstone ; Brunswick 3085, Wendell Hall ; with H.M.V., B.2319, Jack Smith and Col. 4000, Percival Mackey as second strings. PEPPERING.

★ ★ ★

TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by H. F. V. LITTLE)

NACHT UND TRÄUME

Poem by Matthäus von Collin. Music by Schubert, Op. 43, No. 2.

E. Heckmann-Bettendorf, Parlophone, E. 10399, 12in., d.s.
L. Slezak, Polydor, 65773, 12in., d.s., black.

Heil'ge Nacht, du sinkest nieder ;
Thou descendest, holy night ;

Nieder wallen auch die Träume,
Dreams, too, are streaming,

Wie dein Mondlicht durch die Räume,
As thy moonbeams do through space,

Durch der Menschen stille, stille Brust.
Through the tranquil hearts of all mankind.

:| Die belauschen sie mit Lust, |:
We welcome them with rapture

Rufen wenn der Tag erwacht :
And cry, when day awakes,

" Kehre wieder, heil'ge Nacht ;
" *Come back again, thou holy night ;*

:| Holde Träume, kehret wieder ! " |:
Beautiful dreams, return ! "

GESANG WEYLA'S

Poem by Eduard Mörike. Music by Hugo Wolf.

J. Groenen, Polydor, 62407, 10in., d.s., black.
G. Stuckgold, Polydor, 20083, 10in., d.s., green.
O. Wolf, Polydor, 62449, 10in., d.s., black.

Du bist Orplid, mein Land, das ferne leuchtet.
Thou art Orplid, my land, in the distance gleaming.

Vom Meere dampfet dein besonnter Strand
Mist-like from thy sun-kissed strand rises

Den Nebel, so der Götter Wange feuchtet.
The spray, wetting the cheeks of the Gods.

Uralte Wasser steigen verjüngt
Ancient waters rise rejuvenated

Um deine Hüften, Kind.
Around thy loins, child.

Vor deiner Gottheit beugen sich Könige,
Before thy divinity bend kings,

Die deine Wärter sind.
On thee attending.

DER ATLAS (Atlas)

Poem by Heine. Music by Schubert.

Slezak, Polydor, 62422, 10in., d.s., black.

:| Ich unglücksel'ger Atlas ! |: eine Welt,
I, unfortunate Atlas, a world,

Die ganze Welt der Schmerzen muss ich tragen,
The whole world of sorrows must carry.

Die ganze Welt muss ich tragen.

Ich trage Unerträgliches, und brechen
I bear the insupportable and the heart

Will mir das Herz im Leibe.
In my breast will break.

Du stolzes Herz, du hast es ja gewollt !
Ay, proud heart, thou hast so willed it !

Du wolltest glücklich sein, unendlich glücklich,
Thou would'st be happy, infinitely happy,

Oder :| unendlich elend, |: stolzes Herz ;
Or infinitely miserable, proud heart ;

Und jetzo bist du elend.
And now thou art miserable.

Ich unglücksel'ger . . .etc.